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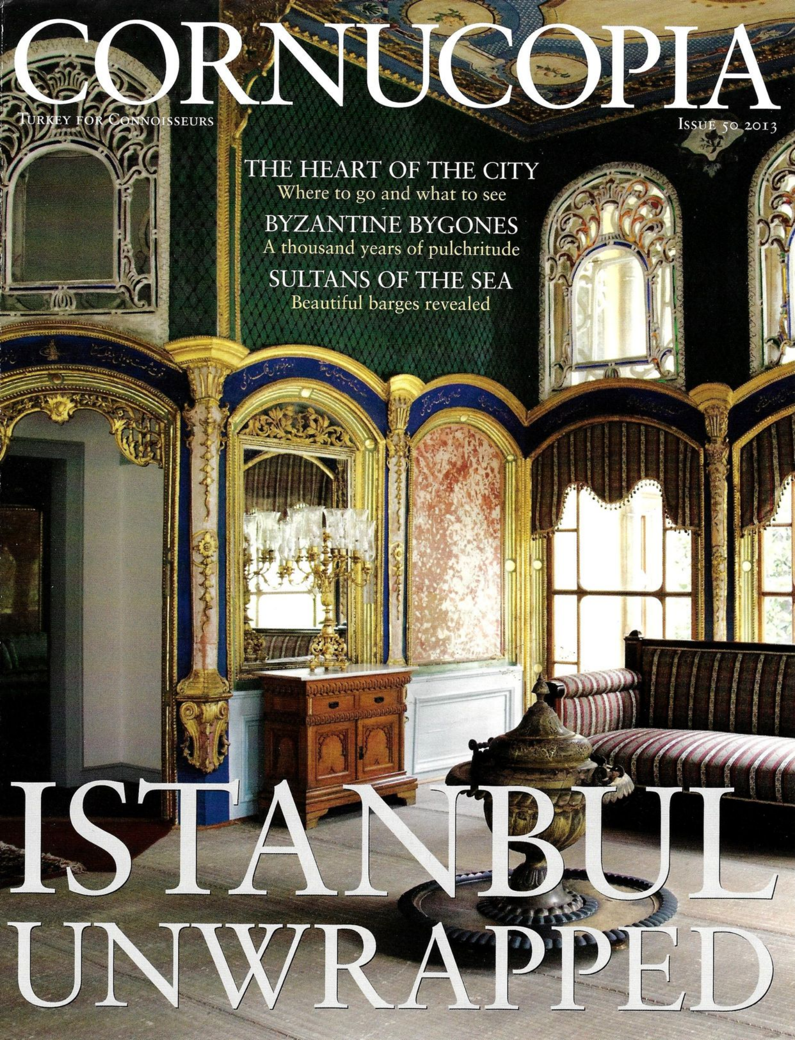
TURKEY FOR CONNOISSEURS

ISSUE 50 2013



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Cover: The Aynalıkavak Pavilion. Photograph by Fritz von der Schulenburg. See 'The Mirrored Pavilion', page 132

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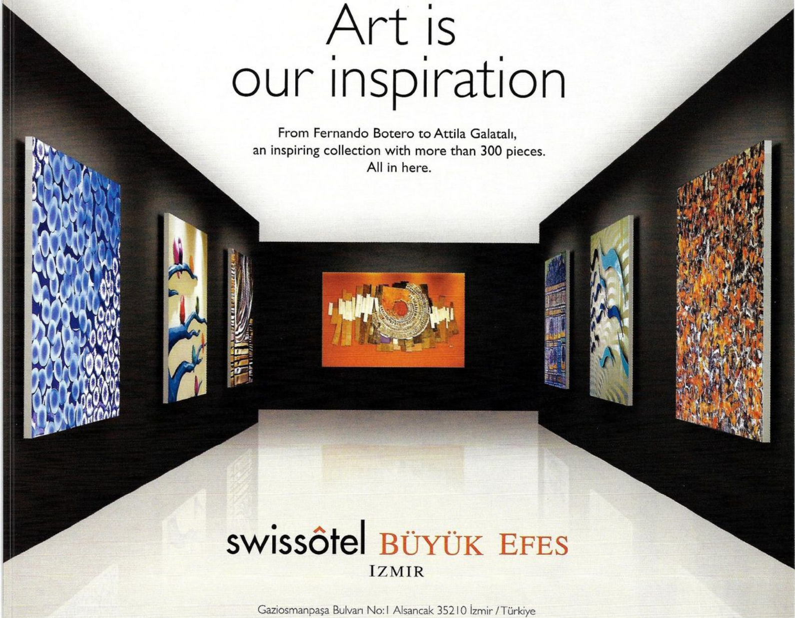

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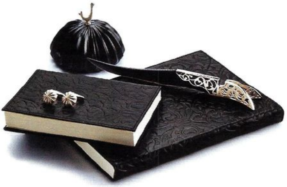

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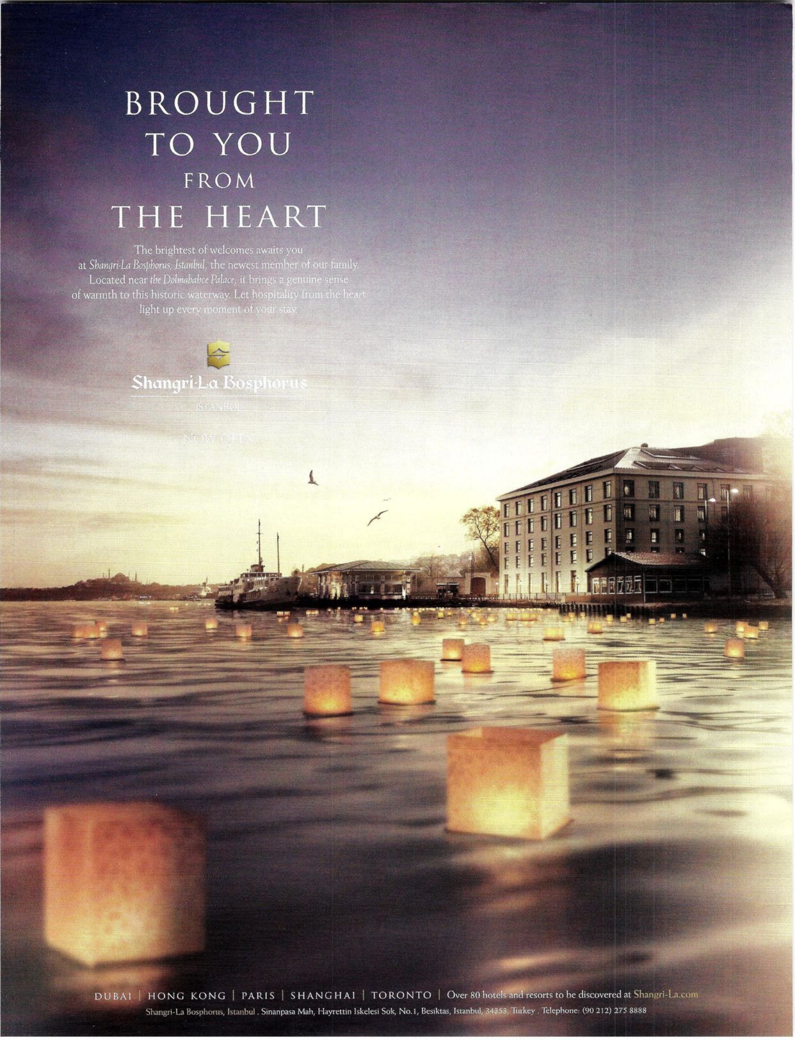

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CONNOISSEUR

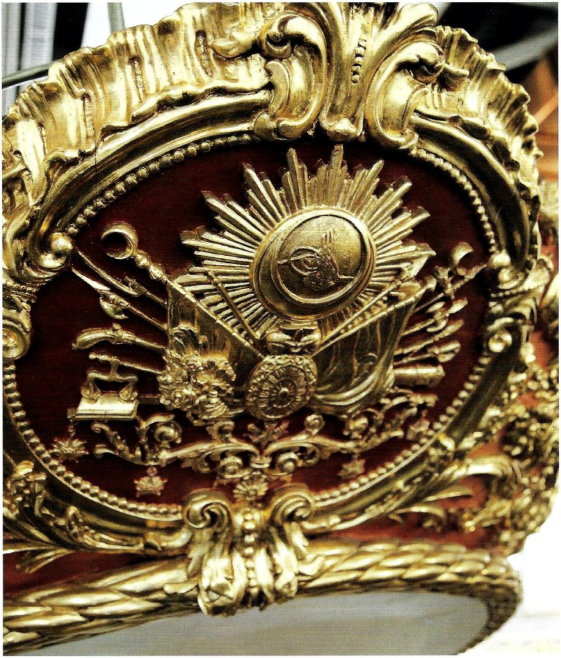
WE MARK OUR 50TH ISSUE WITH A CELEBRATION OF ISTANBUL'S SPECTACULARLY REINVENTED MARITIME MUSEUM AND ITS MOST DAZZLING EXHIBITS

DECKED IN SPLENDOUR

THE NEW WING OF THE NAVAL MUSEUM IN BEŞİKTAŞ AND ITS FABULOUSLY ORNATE IMPERIAL BARGES ARE A REVELATION, WRITES GENCER EMİROĞLU. PHOTOGRAPHS BY FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG

Turkey's rich and long-undervalued maritime history at last has the showcase it deserves. In October, after almost four years in the building, Istanbul's Naval Museum's new gallery opened its doors. Established in 1897, the museum has had several homes, moving in 1961 to its present site in Beşiktaş on the European shore of the Bosphorus. Only now, though, does it offer a space worthy of its collection of 20,000 artefacts, ranging from the only original intact example of a galley (*kadırga*) to a humble but historic dinghy, from splendid figureheads and ensigns to weaponry, uniforms, manuscripts, paintings and nautical hardware.

Most dazzling of all is the finest collection of wooden ceremonial boats in the world, the imperial caiques, ▷ *page 15*

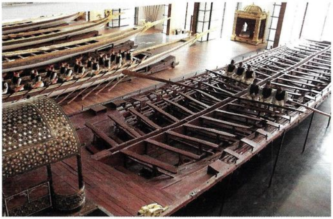


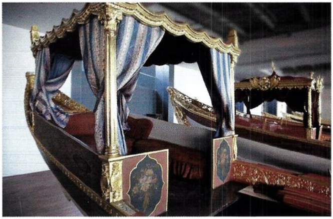
THE PRESTIGE OF THE SULTANS' BARGES CONTINUED UNDIMMED INTO THE 20TH CENTURY. THIS COAT OF ARMS ADORNS ONE OF THE LAST BARGES OF THE OTTOMAN DYNASTY, BUILT FOR MEHMED V REŞAD (1909–18)

So much gilding called for an army of artisans to maintain the barges. Even today, with the vessels on dry land, the Naval Museum has to keep up this costly process to show visitors how they looked in the 19th century

This page Acanthus leaves decorate the harem barge of Abdülmecid I (1839–61). Palace women's barges were embellished with fruit, flowers and foliage

Opposite The Sultan's own barge, built in 1850, bears gilded arms on the stern. The detail of the ornamentation was the only way to distinguish men's barges from women's. From afar they looked identical



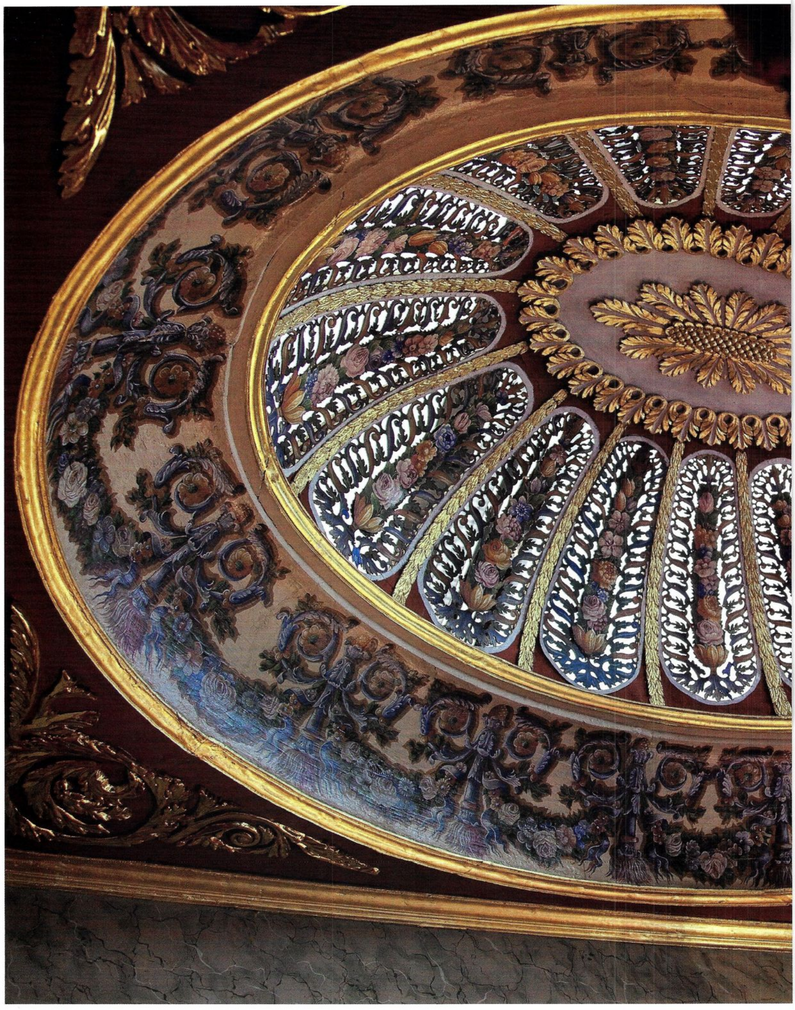


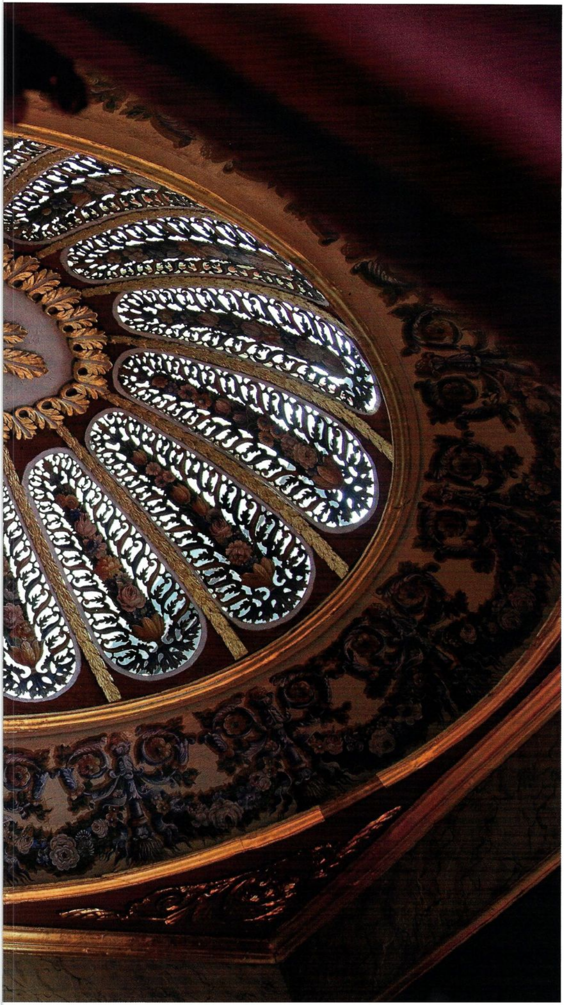
Above A flotilla of sultans' barges dwarfs the museum's director, Commander Erbaş (the tiny figure on the far left). These 'swans', with their slender, curved rudders, have always been treasured. In the Second World War, they were given sanctuary in Konya

Far left The 40-metre 'kadirga' (galley), an ancient Roman design. The museum's hangar-like space was purpose-built to house the boats. The backdrop, viewed through a wall of glass, is the Bosphorus

Centre left These caiques, with their curtained kiosks, belonged to Abdülmecid I and his brother Abdülaziz (1861–76), who succeeded him and radically transformed the navy, making it the world's third largest

Left The most elaborate parts of imperial caiques are their prows and sterns. The gilded 'keman baş' (violin-head) prow of Abdülmecid's caique arches in a triumphant wave of shields, swords, spears and quivers full of arrows



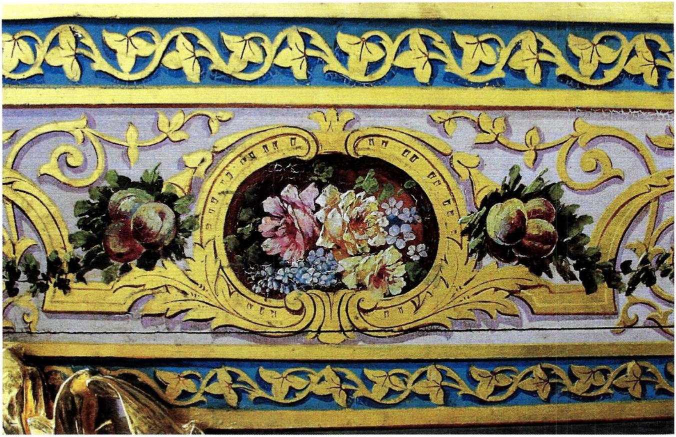


known as "the sultans' barges", which are displayed in a new, specially built space.

This treasure house is not only the largest purpose-built museum in Turkey, but one of the largest maritime museums in Europe. It was first scheduled to open on July 1, 2010 – Maritime Festival Day – and then on every July 1 since. In the end, the grand opening did not happen until October 4, 2013, just one week after the 475th anniversary of the Ottoman victory over a Holy League of Catholic powers in the sea battle of Preveza, western Greece, in 1538. It was as if Hayreddin Barbarossa himself, the brilliant admiral who masterminded this naval triumph that assured

ABOVE THIS BALDACHIN SERVED MAHMUD II (1808–39) AS A MOVEABLE THRONE ROOM AT HIS NEW NAVAL ACADEMY. THE INNOVATIVE SULTAN ALSO HAD THE WORLD'S LARGEST WARSHIP, THE MAHMUDİYE, BUILT IN 1829 IN THE GOLDEN HORN DOCKYARDS

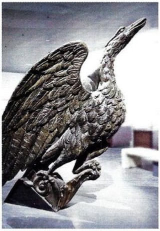
LEFT BENEATH THE ORNATE BALDACHIN DOME, MAHMUD AND HIS SUCCESSORS SAT QUIZZING CADETS AT EXAMINATION TIME

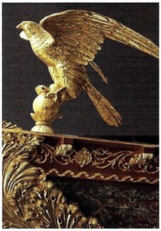


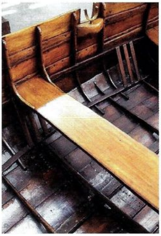
Ottoman dominance of the Mediterranean, had been orchestrating the building works from his monumental tomb a few paces away.

Although the new Republic of Turkey brought an end to the Ottoman Empire in 1923, a year after expelling the imperial dynasty, the Turkish navy made a concerted effort to keep the sultans' barges "alive", at least in the case of the smaller examples, which could be maintained under one roof. Thanks to almost a century of costly and scrupulous stewardship, visitors today can admire the very boats that were used by the sultan, his family and palace officials.

The museum website provides a wealth of information about the collection, but nothing compares to the experience of standing by a barge and contemplating its details – the beautifully turned oars, the rowers' seats, passenger section, ornamentation… Indeed so magnificent are the restored barges – the longest and



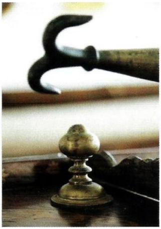




Above and left Decoration on the hull of Bezmiâlem Valide Sultan's barge, and her gilded eagle. The mother of Abdülmecid, she was queen mother from 1839 to 1853

Far left The great 'Black Bird', with its seabird's head and wings and eagle's claws, was the figurehead of the frigate Şeref Rezan, symbolising its virtues. Carved at the Imperial Arsenal in 1830, it must have been lovingly cared for by the crew. It remains in excellent condition, despite exposure to the elements

Left and far left Atatürk's dinghy. In the 1930s he often appeared in public in Ankara and Istanbul, rowing himself in a modest, undecorated craft, determined to counter the image of a distant sultan and promote the benefits of sport in the new Turkey



Above and left Part of the handle of the Turkish oar is a thick, globular section, often colourfully painted. This balances the heavy weight of the shaft, helping oarsmen to cope with the strong currents of the Bosphorus. Longer caiques, rowed by a dozen or more pairs of oarsmen, could achieve nine knots. Turkish oars did not sit in rowlocks like European ones; instead each was loosely fixed to an angled pin with a horse-leather ribbon which required frequent oiling

Left Oar blades and matching handles, such as these, were painted and often gilded by specialist artists known as 'kalemkâr'. The layers of paintwork would be carefully renewed twice a year to keep the wood from rotting. In addition to the globes, the crescent edge to the blade made rowing easier

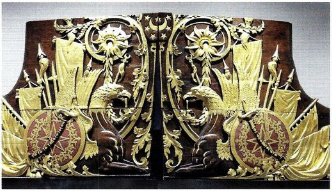
Above Barge poles were used from the shore, to hook round the caique's brass fittings, secure it to the quay and keep the boat steady. Ropes would have allowed too much movement and damaged the fragile hulls

fastest measuring 30 metres, with 13 pairs of oars – that one is almost overawed at standing so close to them.

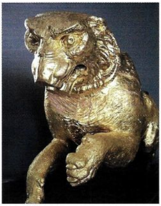
The sultans' barges, along with other craft and the timber relics of historically important Ottoman naval ships, are masterpieces of the Ottoman boat-building tradition as well as of bravura in ornamentation. Until the mid-20th century, boat handling and travel were second nature to the inhabitants of Istanbul, who kept a weather eye on the northeasterly and southerly winds, the *poyraz* and the *lodos*. Daily life depended on the city's waterways, while the availability of good-quality timber and the expertise of master boat-builders, carvers and painters made the construction of first-class vessels possible.

Swift imperial barges were the pinnacle of this local artistry. They were used to ferry the sultan and palace officials to Friday prayers at waterfront mosques such as that at Ortaköy, or to Eyüp for the sword-girding ceremony that marked a new sultan's accession to the throne. In summer, the imperial family would move by barge to their palaces on the Bosphorus. Privileged foreign dignitaries on visits to Istanbul might also be taken on short trips. The Prince of Wales and his party were passengers in 1860, and on several occasions Kaiser Wilhelm II enjoyed being rowed by strong oarsmen dressed in white silk, with red fezzes, coxed by the chief boatman at the tiller. So busy was the city's port that cannon salutes were essential to clear the way for these ceremonial vessels.

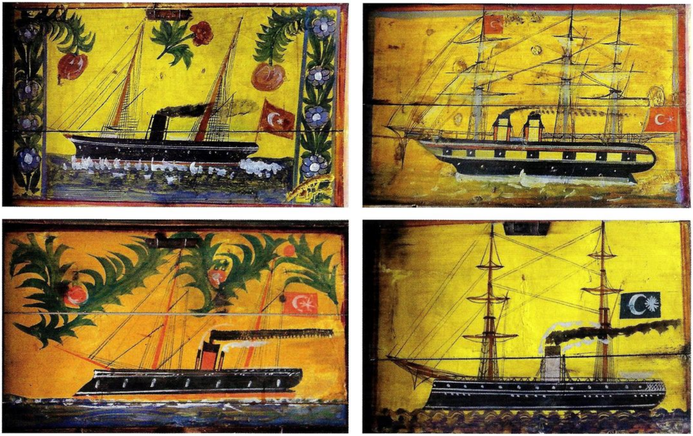
Some of the sultans' barges were fitted with kiosks to shelter passengers. In later models these were moved from the stern towards the middle of the boat for greater stability. Closed kiosks were provided for the use of women of the palace harem – the sultan's mother, wives and female servants. Within the palace and private houses men and women lived *en famille*, but they were segregated in public,



ABOVE GRYPHONS, FLAGS AND WEAPONRY DECORATE THE BOW OF THE GLASGOW-BUILT IRONCLAD FRIGATE ORHANIYE. WITH THE LAUNCH OF FOUR IRONCLADS IN THE LATER 19TH CENTURY, THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE BECAME A MAJOR SEA POWER



RIGHT FIGUREHEADS ARE THE SOLE SURVIVORS OF MANY SHIPS. THIS LION IS A RELIC OF THE WARSHIP FETHİYE, BUILT IN THE 1850S, WHEN THE OTTOMAN NAVY NEEDED A LION'S COURAGE TO HOLD THE EMPIRE TOGETHER


THE COLLECTION OF THE ISTANBUL NAVAL MUSEUM

and waterways were no exception. Women of the palace had to use separate boats, even when they were sailing to the same destination as the men.

Sultan Abdülaziz (1861–76) remains one of the rulers best loved and respected by today's Turkish navy, thanks to his modernisation of the fleet in 1875. By acquiring the latest equipment and constructing the most advanced ships, he raised the Ottoman navy to become the third most powerful fleet in the world after the British and French. A section in the old museum building devoted to his reforms is now being restored.

Enthusiasts can browse the shelves of souvenirs designed for the new museum shop – model boats, books, postcards, puzzles, ceramics and textiles. The museum now also has a café, with a view of the *kadırga*. Built to an ancient Roman design for an early sultan, this is the only surviving original galley in the world. Looking in the other direction, as you sit over a peaceful Turkish coffee, you can also admire a view of the shiny brass propellor of the famous battlecruiser Yavuz (formerly the German SMS Goeben, transferred to the Ottoman fleet in 1914) and imagine how different the course of history might have been if it were not displayed in front of the Naval Museum but instead lay rusting on the Aegean sea floor, as the result of the future Ottoman flagship's pursuit and bombardment by the Royal Navy at the outbreak of the First World War. ◆

Gencer Emiroğlu is a researcher and lecturer documenting wooden boat-building as a vanishing craft in Istanbul; genceremiroglu@gmail.com

The Istanbul Naval Museum, Beşiktaş, is open Wednesday to Sunday, 9–5; denizmuzeleri.tsk.tr/en/; tel +90 212 327 4345

Above and opposite, top Folk art in the museum's collection includes the lids of Aegean dowry chests. Oil paintings inside the lids depict warships – corvettes and frigates – propelled by both sail and steam

Left The oldest object in the museum is a piece of the Roman chain that once stretched across the mouth of the Golden Horn. This trusty defensive device withstood countless sieges over the centuries and initially kept out Mehmed the Conqueror's fleet. Mysteriously, the Byzantines awoke one May morning in 1453 to see Ottoman ships in the harbour. The chain was still intact. No one could understand how they got in

LETTER FROM ANATOLIA

Lords of the folk dance

A macho warrior's dance gives way to a daintily dignified sirto; an other-worldly comic turn follows a magical fire dance; a decorous 12-couple finale rounds off the show. Roger Norman finds himself spellbound

He is handsome, square-jawed, a tough guy. Bare-kneed, with baggy shorts, long socks, scarlet garters, shrunken waistcoat, braided belt, brightly beaded cap, white blouse that billows at the sleeves. Part scoutmaster, part bandit. Uncertain origin. Vlach? Bulgar? A whiff of the mountains, certainly. He's one of 12, in a circle. All of them lean, twinkle-toed, shod in black leather. The music strikes up – pipe, whistles and drums – with the haunting, sylvan sounds of Balkan hill-music. An upland solitude hovers within the lilting rhythm.

It's a warrior's dance, made with skips and hops and sudden stalking strides. There is a tension between the manliness of the figures and the delicacy of the steps, the perfect poise of toes, the embracing arms. The movements of the head are swift and precise, birdlike. An arm is flung out and the head briskly follows, as if to supervise. The other arm flings out and the head swivels sharply to observe it.

The twinkling steps have the charm of the doe, but the staglike bounds with which the squadron patrols its circle have a martial air. If one dancer were to stumble, the dance would falter, the battle would be lost. This is no morris dance with its faint sense of self-mockery. These are soldiers making play of what is deadly serious. Manly men, skipping with the discipline of troopers. In billows of pale blue muslin, the women suddenly appear, as if driven by a stiff breeze. They are petite, aglitter with sequins and the glint of bright beads. The sexes meet, weave, conjoin, complete, and exit.

Next up, the strains of the sirto, timeless Aegean jig. Over centuries, seamen have scampered it, fishermen fooled with it, islanders eyed it among the tables of the long maritime evenings. On the Aegean everyone knows sirto! The dancers for this are more daintily shod and more festively dressed, more spark than flame, closer to weddings than war. Only in the perfect co-ordination of foot, hand, head and eye are they alike, and here it is that the trained dancers surpass the ouzo-fuelled revels of the islands. The *baş*, *kephali*, *tête* or bonce must be held perfectly still so what is delightful may also be dignified. The gaze does not wander, the eyes do not stray, the body and its parts are as one.

The sirto dancers noiselessly evanesce. A copper pot is brought and set at the centre of the stage. In it a flame is lit and the fire-dance begins. Each dancer holds aloft a candle, steps forward, adds his flame to the firepot. In the pot once upon a time, you suspect, was not food but magic. One dancer has a certain wildness of look and gesture, an air of greater mischief. He is the ringleader, insisting on the exact order of the dance according to the recipe that concocts the magic.

The great age of these dances does not require a scholar to pronounce. It is there in the confident rhythm of the steps, the faint reflection of a daily life in the hills or by the sea. A man drops to his knees and rinses his face in a stream or retrieves a precious object from the ground. These steps, somehow sanctified by the infinitely slow passage of time, contrast rudely with modern dance, with its awkward innovations, its unconventionalities, the offbeat rhythm of lack and desire. In the folk dance, men get their girls and girls their men, soldiers celebrate their solidarity, guests enjoy their feasts, men make their magic and women cast their spell. In modern dance, the agonies and absences of acrobats are sent upward unanswered. Perhaps the reactions of spectators to these two dance forms, allied but contrasting, reveal their dispositions, to enjoy convention or to applaud its deliberate disregard. Some may like both, of course.

> *'In the folk dance, men get their girls and girls their men, soldiers celebrate their solidarity, guests enjoy their feasts, men make their magic and women cast their spell'*

Back onstage: the comic turn. Something enters, you are not sure what. A dwarf, or child, with an enormous hat. No, an adult after all, with arms cradling the head, wrapped and bound to create a rectangular headpiece, like a giant turban. Below this, a comic face has been daubed on the vest. The dancer's trunk is the head, eyes on the chest, nose in the middle of the rib cage, mouth at the level of the waist. A pair of stuffed arms flap excitedly as the clown mimes. Lo! A second curious creature appears, same design but female. They approach, circle each other like dogs nose to tail. She's after him but he plays hard to get. The movements of the torso bring the comic painted face to life, the lines of sinew and muscle trace taut patterns on the flat, make-believe faces. They are reminiscent of Tenniel's Queen of Hearts. These two cannot get on, despite her unmistakable advances. A third creature trips onstage, also female. This is the one he wants! The first female is soon excluded, whirling around, boneless arms aflap, enraged. She storms off, leaving them to it. Later she returns in a huff, insinuating herself between the contented couple. To no avail.

At the end of their unique pantomime, the three dancers stretch their arms and tear off their headpieces to reveal their human faces. All three are men. One might have guessed it from the size of their shoes. But in this dance, the feet were unimportant. One watched the comic contortions of the dwarvish faces, growing oddly accustomed to these truncated beings in their peculiar world.

The folk dances resume. Twelve males and twelve females enter separately then swiftly mingle, forming a single line with alternate men and women. The dancers have been carefully chosen. No beanpoles or shorties. The caps of the women are precisely at the level of the men's cheekbones. The uniformity is striking. Such settled gender roles, costumes, sizes do not chime with the unisex tendencies of the 21st century. But how agreeable they are, how relaxing, how easy on the eye! The plumage of the male is darker and more sombre, that of the female more fanciful, with more glitter. He's made with straighter lines and she with arcs and curves. In pairs there is a symmetry, or symbiosis.

These are heresies in the world of the gaymen and the shemen and the stern adherents of the written s/he. But the old folk dances with their glittering precision and the whiffs they bring of older times may survive the contemporary fashions, even of the sharp-tongued kind. What was remarkable to me was how a wooden stage at Anadolu University, with monochrome backcloth – this wooden O – was so swiftly transformed into the hills and horizons of our ancient ancestors. ◆

Roger Norman is a lecturer at Anadolu University in Eskişehir and a novelist; his latest book is Shadowborne (Sundial Press, £14.95).
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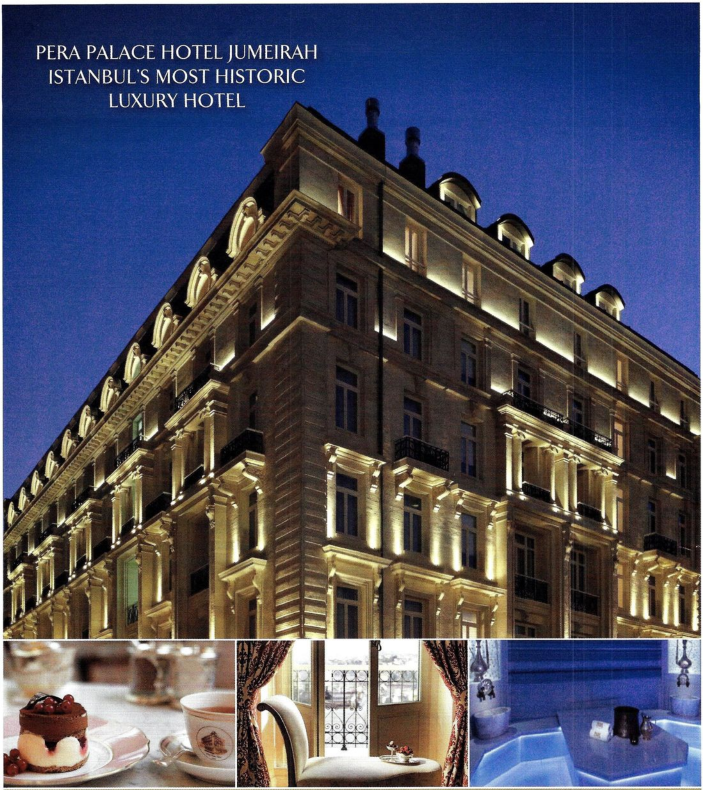

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ISTANBUL'S DARKEST HOUR

DAVID BARCHARD ON THE MOMENTOUS EVENTS ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO WHEN ONE DEVASTATING BALKAN WAR LED TO A SECOND, THREATENING THE VERY EXISTENCE OF ISTANBUL

TURKISH REFUGEES FLEE TO ISTANBUL: 240,000 MUSLIM CIVILIANS DIED IN THE BALKANS IN 1912

On the morning of January 24, 1913, Turkey had a new government, one that had come to power through a violent military coup. The previous day a group of officers had forced Kâmil Pasha, the 79-year-old grand vizier, to write out his resignation at gunpoint. The coup-makers, Enver, Talat and Cemal, would rule Turkey for most of the next six years until defeat in the First World War drove them into exile in 1918. A veteran general, Mahmut Şevket Pasha, hero of the suppression of an Islamist uprising in April 1909, served as grand vizier.

It was a terrible beginning to a terrible period. In a few weeks in October and November the previous year, thanks to an alliance between Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece and Montenegro, Turkey had lost about 95 percent of its territory in Europe.

By February 1913 just three Turkish cities in the Balkans had not been conquered – and all three were under siege and weeks away from falling. They were Scutari (today Shkodër), far away on the Adriatic coast, Ioannina (Yannina or Yanya), also in the far west, and Edirne. Scutari and Ioannina were now very distant from the Ottoman frontier and their cause was hopeless. Edirne was the gateway for military control of southeastern Thrace. The future of Istanbul hung upon its fate, for the new Turkish government's temporary northwest frontier was the Çatalca line, only 55 kilometres from the capital. Regaining Edirne would mean strategic security for eastern Thrace and Istanbul.

An armistice at Çatalca on December 3, 1912 had seen Turkish and Bulgarian troops suspending fire while a peace conference got under way in London. Greece, however, did not sign and remained at war with Turkey.

As 1913 started, Bulgaria's fortunes were at their zenith, its king, Ferdinand, dreaming of being crowned emperor in Constantinople. With their troops both in earshot of Istanbul and besieging Edirne, Bulgaria's position in southeast Thrace looked assured. It seemed only a matter of time before Istanbul became Bulgarian "Tsargrad".

But Bulgaria's early successes made the other Christian nations of the Balkans jealous. Greece, in particular, was determined to prevent either Serbia or Bulgaria reaching the Aegean coast. Two months earlier Greek armies had raced to Thessalonica and plucked it from Ottoman rule before Serbia or Bulgaria could get there. Thessalonica was now Greek forever.

So Bulgaria accepted help from Serbia to besiege Edirne, but did not allow Greek or Serbian forces to join them at Çatalca – thus reducing pressure on the Ottoman army. King George of Greece, nervous of Bulgaria, chose to remain in camp in Thessalonica rather than return to Athens – a decision that cost him his life when he was murdered by one of his new subjects on March 16.

The larger European states, though less than a year-and-a-half away from the First World War, still held the ring and it was they who decided the shape of the eventual peace treaty, led by Sir Edward Grey, the British foreign secretary. But cracks were appearing. Austria and Russia were increasingly antagonistic. On April 1 the German chancellor, von Bethmann Hollveg, declared ominously in the Reichstag that the balance of forces in the Balkans had been upset by the eviction of European Turkey. "I regard a collision between Slaventum and Germanentum as inevitable." However, this, and his reference to a "European conflagration", merely provoked giggles among his Socialist opponents.

As 1913 began, the Great Powers envisaged a Turkish frontier running from Tekirdağ (then Rodosto) in the south to Cape Malatra about 15 kilometres south of Kıyıköy (then Midye or Midia), leaving Turkey only a narrow strip of southeastern Thrace, which would be hard to defend. But who would there be on the other side? Istanbul's future would be decided by the control of two access points – Gallipoli and Edirne. From a Turkish point of view, the story of the war in 1913 is the story of how that country succeeded in holding these two key places and thus its European territory.

The Dardanelles were the first priority. The Powers had indicated Gallipoli would remain Turkish, but it was already cut off on land by the Bulgarians, who intended to advance further if fighting resumed. They were not the only ones with their eyes on the straits.

On January 18, five days before the Young Turk coup, the Greeks, still at war, struck again, defeating the Ottomans in a two-hour sea battle at Lemnos, outside the Dardanelles. They then landed soldiers in an operation anticipating the famous Anglo-French attack two years later – with the same objective. Greek and Turkish soldiers battled to control the Gallipoli Peninsula while Bulgarian troops waited to the north.

For many years Bulgaria had armed itself heavily in preparation for a war of conquest. Though world public opinion was startled at rapid Bulgarian advances in 1912, the governments of the Powers probably were not. In 1908, a British embassy dispatch had shown that the Bulgarian army was larger and better prepared than the Turks and would probably win in hostilities. The Turks knew this, and military reforms with the support of Germany were in progress, but Bulgaria and its allies had struck too early.

The human cost of the war had been

immense for the losers. Famine, cholera and other sicknesses, hunger and massacres affected local populations regardless of nationality. According to a German estimate in *The Manchester Guardian* of January 16, 1913, 240,000 Muslim civilians had died so far. Hundreds of thousands more crowded into Istanbul as refugees, permanently altering the ethnic profile of Turkey.

But the cost was also high for the victors. Bulgaria was a small country and losses of over 100,000 soldiers had proportionately a much greater impact on its fortunes and fighting capacity, while its finances were also flagging. For King Ferdinand and his armies 1913 would be a year of headlong decline.

On January 17 the Powers sent a note to Turkey urging it to accept the peace terms – including the surrender of Edirne to Bulgaria. Kâmil Pasha's government held an emergency *divan,* a gathering of notables that met only at the empire's direst moments. On January 22 they agreed to accept. This decision to surrender, with all it implied, had triggered the Young Turk coup.

Within six days, despite mutterings from the Powers, the new government had broken off the London peace talks. On February 3 the war started again. But the Turkish position as far as munitions and arms went was improving, with German military help to the arms factory in present-day Bakırköy, though food for the army was running low.

But the new war continued with months of bad news. Enver launched an amphibious operation at Şarköy to reclaim Gallipoli, but it was mismanaged and failed dismally – as predicted by his military critics, Mustafa Kemal and Ali Fethi (Okyar). Of the three strongholds remaining in the Balkans, Ioannina fell to the Greeks on March 6.

Eyes shifted to the siege of Edirne, but on March 26 the city fell to a Serbian-Bulgarian force including 60,000 Serbians. The Ottoman garrison had resisted heroically. "On Shukri [Mehmet Şükrü Pasha] and his comrades shines the last ray of the setting sun of Ottoman glory," wrote a Russian newspaper. Closer to the capital there was better news: on March 24 the Bulgarians, thinking the way to the Sea of Marmara was open, launched a ten-day offensive, a fresh attempt to break the Çatalca line. It failed.

On April 23 the last major Turkish stronghold in the Balkans, Scutari on the distant Adriatic coast, finally fell to the Montenegrins. By then five centuries of Ottoman rule and military presence in the Western Balkans were only a memory.

The Young Turks, like their predecessors, were forced to sign an armistice and negotiate a partition. The signing took place on April 19 at Bolayır, the neck of the Gallipoli peninsula where Turkish troops still faced the Bulgarians. Negotiations in London were renewed, and the Treaty of London ending the First Balkan War was signed on May 30: Turkey's frontiers would now run from Enez (as they still do) to Kıyıköy on the Black Sea coast – an arrangement which would not last. The treaty was seen as a triumph for Sir Edward Grey.

But before the First Balkan War was even finished, a second was already getting under way. The Balkan allies had disliked and distrusted each other before the war. Its windfall gains gave them fresh reasons for jealousy. Both Greece and Serbia resented Bulgaria's gains, Serbia feeling Edirne would not have fallen without its help. Bulgaria, whose nationalists to this day see it as "a land with three seas" rather than just one, had been locked out of the Mediterranean. King Ferdinand now decided to retrieve the situation by striking at his former allies.

On May 22, a week before the end of the peace conference, Bulgarian troops attacked Greek positions in Macedonia, then fired at the Greek fleet near Kavala and Thessalonica. The land fighting was fierce and bloody.

Serbia and Greece drifted closer to war with Bulgaria, building up soldiers on the front lines, though hostilities were not formally declared until the end of the month.

Meanwhile, in Istanbul there was a further political convulsion. On June 11 the grand vizier, Mahmut Şevket Pasha, was assassinated when his car was ambushed by terrorists in a Beyoğlu sidestreet. The assassins seem to have been Circassians taking revenge for the killing of Nazım Pasha six months earlier. Twelve conspirators were executed. But the killing was followed by a crackdown on the opposition, more than 350 of whom were exiled to Sinop. The new vizier was the Egyptian prince, Sait Halim Pasha, but the triumvirate now tightened its grip on power.

On June 30 Bulgaria launched a full-scale attack on Greece and Serbia, but in the ensuing battles it was the Greek and Serbian armies who were victorious. Bulgaria was militarily exhausted. Worse still, it now faced two other combatants. Its northern neighbour, Romania, hitherto outside the struggle, declared war on Bulgaria on July 11 and swiftly occupied its northern provinces to within a few miles of Sofia. At the same time, to its south, Turkish armies seized their opportunity to roll forward and revise the new frontiers. The Bulgarians were driven out of villages around Bolayır and Çatalca.

By mid-July *The Times* was predicting "a very pretty battle" at Alexandropoulis (Dedeağaç) and noted: the Turkish nation has "fixed its eyes on Adrianople". Luleburgaz was reoccupied, then Kırklareli (Kırkkilise).

These were relatively easy gains. Even Edirne itself, earlier in the year the centre of the Bulgarian army's high command, now contained only a small garrison. But the thought of Turkey regaining territory was unwelcome in Western Europe. "A breach of faith," said *The Times.* "An insult to the Powers," said an MP. Even Turkey's few professed friends in Europe were against the retaking of Edirne. Aubrey Herbert, a Conservative MP who, with Talat Pasha, was the founder of the forerunner of today's Anglo-Turkish Society in London, wrote (under a pseudonym) in *The Times* that retaking Edirne would be a waste of energy.

"If the Imperial Ottoman Government persists in reoccupying Adrianople, Turkey will at best lose the support of the Concert [ie the Powers], be saddled with fresh internal problems, remain entangled in the perils and chances of a region where international stability will not be regained for many decades… The highest duty of the Ottoman Government is to make certain of the future prosperity and freedom of the Ottoman peoples rather than to expend energy… endeavouring to retain mere symbols of a past that has no correspondence with the future."

Perhaps it is not surprising after this that Turkish policymakers have repeatedly ignored the advice and wisdom of their European friends and allies on such matters as Cyprus. Edirne and Thrace would prove the most pacific and stable region of Turkey.

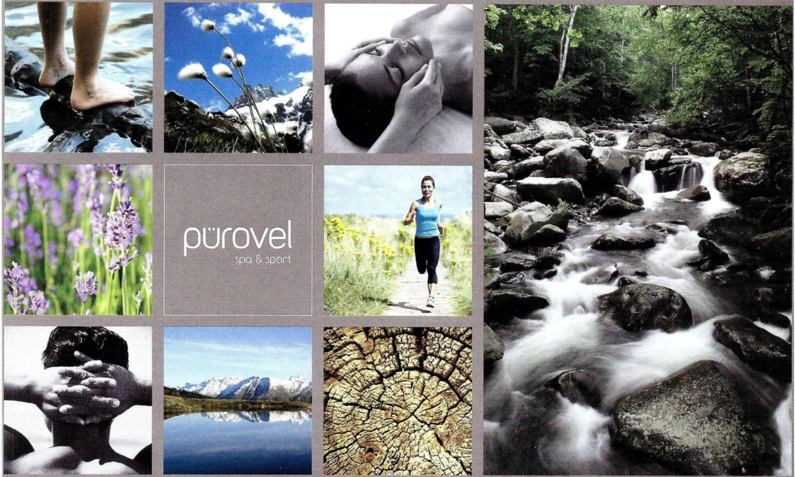
By the time Herbert's letter appeared, Edirne had in fact once more been Turkish for several days, entered by Enver Pasha with no losses, four days before the fifth anniversary of the end of absolute rule by Abdülhamid II in 1908. In Sofia there was consternation; in Istanbul, patriotic rejoicing.

At first Europe believed Turkey would disgorge Edirne. "There is general agreement as to the impossibility of allowing the Turks to remain in possession of Adrianople," said *The Times.* Even the Germans thought the reoccupation would only be temporary. A few thought differently. "In the hands of the Turks, it will be a pledge for the peace of Thrace and the security of Constantinople… Great Britain ought to be glad to see them remain there," wrote Sir Roper Lethbridge, but he was a lone voice.

It had been a principle of the late-19th-century prime minister Lord Salisbury that land taken by Christians from Muslims would never be restored to the latter. But in 1913, to the annoyance of Bulgaria and its sympathisers, the Powers, after protesting, took no action against Turkey: Russia was disposed to intervene but did not, presumably fearing Austrian and German reactions.

On September 29 Turkey and Bulgaria signed a peace treaty under which the Turks retained Edirne and eastern Thrace. It would prove a lasting peace. But other wars loomed. As European war correspondents packed up to leave the Balkans at the end of hostilities, they joked among themselves that they would all be meeting again very soon to cover the coming war between Austria and Russia. ◆

David Barchard is writing a book of Ottoman biographies. He described the First Balkan War in 'Bloodshed in the Balkans', Cornucopia 47



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LEADING
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MAGIC MOVEMENTS

AyşeDeniz Gökçin's musical creations combine the rock-star appeal of Franz Liszt and the psychedelic/progressive brilliance of the band Pink Floyd.

Tony Barrell found this prodigiously talented young pianist a force to be reckoned with.

Photograph by Charles Hopkinson

AyşeDeniz Gökçin is telling me about a restless moment she had in a Turkish cinema in 1987. Her mother, Ayşegül, had gone to see *Amadeus*, the sumptuous, multi-award-winning film about the rivalry between Mozart and Salieri. Tiny AyşeDeniz had a destiny as a classical pianist, so the music may have made an impression on her. She might have enjoyed watching the movie too, if she could have seen it. But she was still in the womb of her mother, who was seven months pregnant with her.

"Apparently I wouldn't stay still," laughs Gökçin. "So she decided there and then that I was going to be a classical musician."

There may have been another clue in that child's restlessness: this would not be any old classical musician, but one who might shake things up and push a few boundaries.

Confirmation of her mother's cinema hunch came soon enough, when the baby girl took to the piano like a flamingo to the Sultan Marshes. "We had an upright piano at home in Ankara," she recalls, "and no one knew how to play it. But when I was two, my parents would put me by it and I would improvise and sing for hours. My dad had a video camera and he recorded me. It was more like an impression of a pianist than real piano-playing; I would even turn the pages of the score as I played." By the age of six Gökçin was a serious piano student, and her strict Turkish teachers had her playing in front of her first audience. She managed a note-perfect performance of a charming Beethoven *écossaise*, despite running a fever.

"I love going on stage," she tells me, her brown eyes seeming to flash with excitement. "It always felt very natural. I would perform better than at any other time. It helps me concentrate. Okay, it sounds egotistical, but I like being in the spotlight," she laughs. "I like it when people are finally there to listen to me after all that hard work. Otherwise, there's no point: I don't want to do music just for myself."

And there have been years of hard work. Gökçin, now 25, reels out the story of her education: how she went from one teacher to another as she gradually grew more and more proficient, and how her enterprising father, Balamber, contacted Rosalyn Tureck, the Chicago-born pianist, harpsichordist and interpreter of Bach, having spotted her name on a CD of 20th-century pianists and fancied that Tureck sounded like a Turkish name. "He emailed her manager, saying his daughter played the piano, and sent a recording of a Bach performance I'd done. She got back to him, saying she wanted me to come to Oxford to take lessons with her. But then she said she had decided to move to Marbella, for health reasons, and that I should go there to study with her."

It was an irresistible offer, but relocating to Spain to study with this 86-year-old woman proved a wrench for the 12-year-old prodigy. "I was just a kid, and I was homesick. My mum came with me, but my dad had work in Turkey, so he had to stay. And culturally, I was lost. Marbella's not a cultural place: it's a tourist resort. I went to a British school, and it was full of these rich kids. When my mother dropped me off in the morning, they thought she was my servant!"

Gökçin returned to Turkey, then faced another succession of teachers and periods of upheaval, including training at a music college in New York State. In 2011, the bicentenary of Franz Liszt's birth, inspiration struck. "I was reading about how he created the image of the pianist as a big star, and played to thousands of people. The more I read, the more I thought, 'He was a rock star!'"

Then she started finding parallels between Liszt and one of her favourite rock bands, Pink Floyd. "Liszt was interested in the idea of the romantic hero who isolates himself from the rest of the world, and the main character in Pink Floyd's *The Wall*, of course, creates this wall around himself."

Shortly after arriving in London to study at the Royal Academy of Music, she was tinkering with some piano arrangements that fused Liszt's *Dante Sonata* with Pink Floyd's 1979 hit 'Another Brick in the Wall'. She took the risk of bringing the project to a lesson, showing it to the head of the academy's keyboard department. "I thought he would be strict and conservative, and say, 'What are you doing? How dare you bring this commercial thing to my class?' But he thought it was very interesting. I was so happy." Enjoying herself, she moved on to two more Floyd songs, 'Wish You Were Here' and 'Hey You', ending up with a three-movement fantasia.

Shortly after graduating with a master's, AyşeDeniz Gökçin found herself in her favourite place – the spotlight – after she released an EP, *Pink Floyd Lisztified*, and brought her new music to the concert hall. At a London concert in St James's Church in Piccadilly, I watched as Gökçin played her fantasia, caressing and attacking the ivories before an enraptured audience. There were frequent murmurs of recognition as those well-loved rock tunes emerged from cascades of luscious Lisztiness. The concert's location was perfect not only for its heavenly acoustics: it was also just yards up Piccadilly from No 201, where Pink Floyd themselves recorded a session for the BBC in 1968.

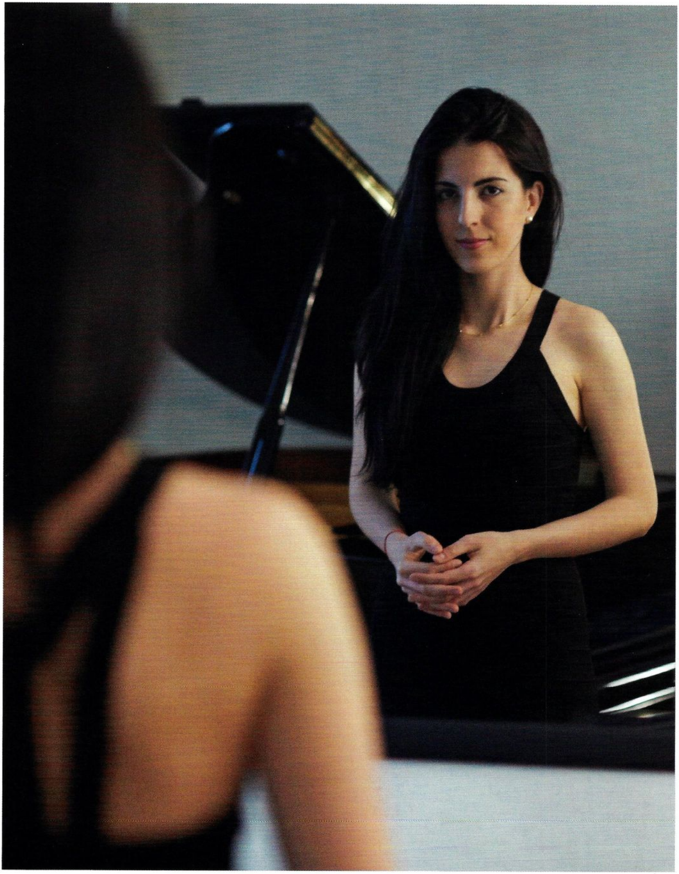
The band's music has been covered extensively, notably by a series of tribute bands (groups who re-create the music of the original musicians in perfect detail). I remember in 1997 watching a convincing performance in Bromley by an outfit calling themselves Pink Fraud. But Gökçin's blend of their music and Liszt's was much more creative and inspired. By coincidence, shortly before I met her I had interviewed Nick Mason, long-serving drummer with Pink Floyd, so I asked his opinion of her music. He said he loved her version of 'Wish You Were Here'. "But then I would always choose a reinterpretation over a slavish copy," he remarked. "What's the point of re-creating every dropped drumstick?"

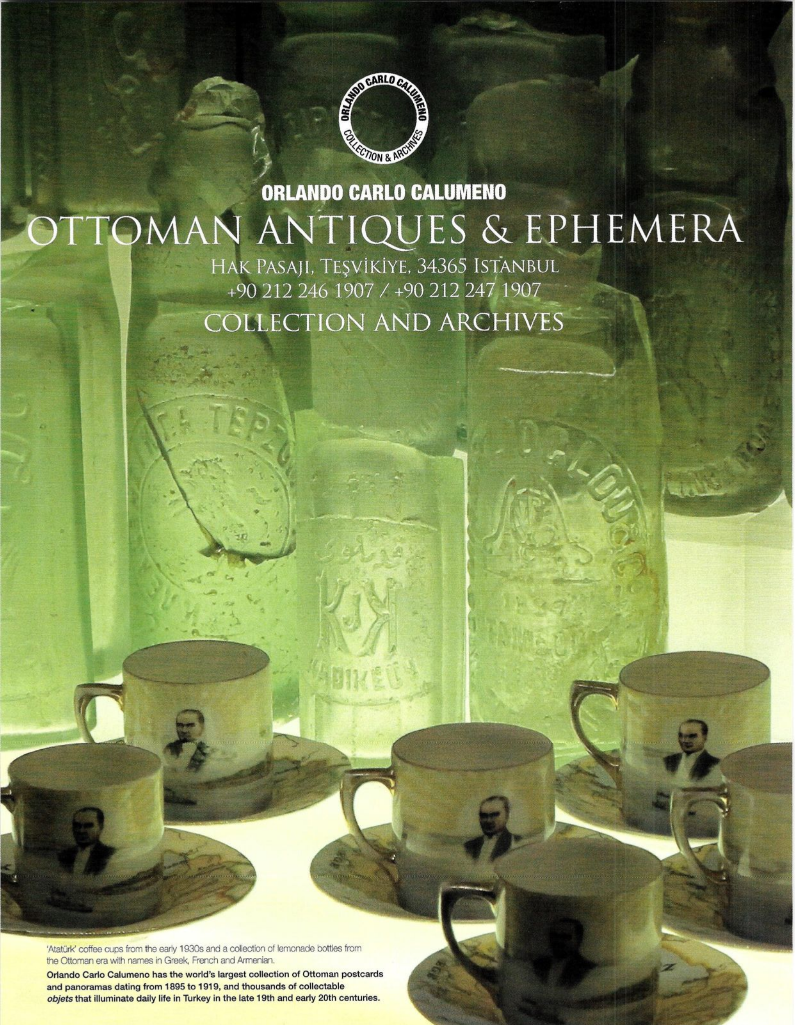
Gökçin has had other nice remarks from fans of both classical and rock music, and there has been some cross-genre conversion. "People have said, 'I never knew about Liszt.'" During a pause in our interview, she chuckles at her smartphone as she finds messages from her fans on Facebook – from Denmark to Dubai – saying how much they love her music, and suggesting other Floyd songs she could rearrange. At the end of November she releases an album, *Pink Floyd Classical Concept*.

While she is certainly experimental, there is something of the instrumental purist about her too. Asked if she has ever been tempted to use electronic keyboards, she replies: "No way. I'm an acoustic-piano person. I want to create all the different sounds with the piano. My aim is to develop its potential."

Isn't there a danger, I ask, of becoming stereotyped as "the girl who classicises Pink Floyd"? "No!" she replies emphatically, before dropping hints about some of her latest projects. She has created an all-piano version of Michael Jackson's 'Billie Jean'. Released as a download and well worth watching on YouTube, her virtuoso performance is jaw-dropping. It would have made Liszt dance his socks off. ◆

Tony Barrell is writing a book about rock drummers for HarperCollins; tonybarrell@msn.com





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PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORIES

Tim Cornwell

Robertson, Photographer and Engraver in the Ottoman Capital

Bahattin Öztuncay
Vehbi Koç Foundation, TL130

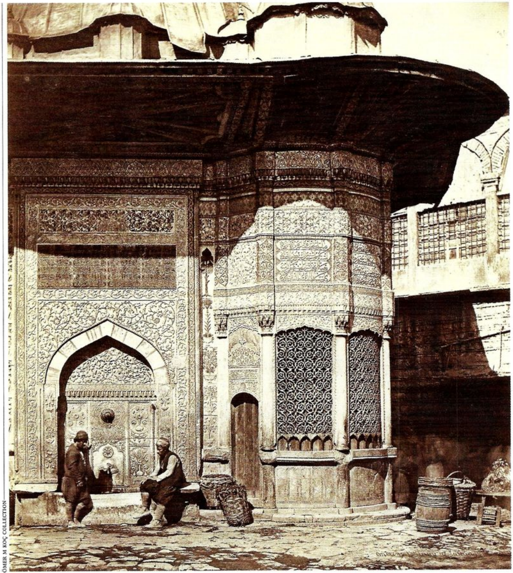
In May 1854 the engraver James Robertson became the first Istanbul photographer known to have taken 360-degree panoramic photographs of the city from Beyazıt Tower.

Honoured by the Ottomans for his 40-year career minting coins and medals, he is now remembered as a pioneer photographer whose early, telling images of the city won acclaim in London and Paris, with a selection purchased by Prince Albert (apparently the first photographs ever purchased for the Royal Collection).

Robert's photographic studio was on the Grand Rue de Pera, now İstiklâl Caddesi, on a site occupied today by the Arter gallery building. At the nearby Koç University Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations (RCAC) a major exhibition of original Robertson photographs and watercolours from the Ömer M Koç Collection celebrates the 200th anniversary of his birth. *Robertson, Photographer and Engraver in the Ottoman Capital* runs until February 2, 2014.

Robertson's work – from landscapes and architecture to costumes and street sellers – formed "the earliest and most comprehensive photographic record of Istanbul," Mr Koç writes in a catalogue preface.

Born in England, of Scottish heritage, Robertson became part of a team recruited in 1841 by Sultan Abdülmecid to reform the Ottoman imperial mint. Paid a princely £40 monthly, he crafted dies to produce modern gold and silver coins. After ten years' work he won the Ottoman medal of honour and went on to design 26 different medals for four Sultans. He retired in 1881 and left Istanbul for Japan, where he died in 1888.



ÖMER M KOÇ COLLECTION

Above 'The Azapkapi Fountain, Galata', signed Robertson & Beato, 1857. This Tulip Period fountain can still be seen next to the Atatürk Bridge. Robertson took his first photograph in 1853. He joined forces with his brother-in-law Felice Beato in 1855. They both became household names

Robertson's short but intense photographic career began as a sideline in the early 1850s, but led to a burst of work in that decade. In October 1853 his first known photographs of Istanbul were published in London in

Photographic Views of Constantinople. From 1855 they showed again in London, Paris and Edinburgh, appearing in *The Illustrated London News*.

Robertson's reputation was secured with his photographs of the Crimean War and images of Athens and Cairo. He sold his studio in 1867 but showed paintings as late as 1881.

The curator and catalogue author, Bahattin Öztuncay, says that Robertson "revealed himself to be a multi-talented artist capable of creating stunning photographs and watercolours of his adopted city's colourful life, unique scenery, and matchless works of architecture and art".

Robertson's recognition "as one of the most important personalities in the early period of photography naturally makes 19th-century Istanbul an essential part of the history of world photography as well".

OVERPAINTED PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMES ROBERTSON OF A TURKISH WOMAN AND A PORTER, 1855

ÖMER M KOÇ COLLECTION

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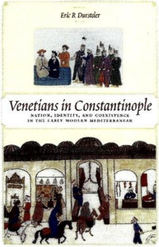
Norman Stone

VISIONS OF THE OTTOMAN WORLD IN RENAISSANCE EUROPE

Andrei Pippidi
Hurst, £17.99

VENETIANS IN CONSTANTINOPLE

Eric R Dursteler
Johns Hopkins University Press, £14


Eric R Dursteler
Venetians in Constantinople
NATION, IDENTITY, AND COEXISTENCE IN THE EARLY MODERN MEDITERRANEAN

"Orientalism" is now used to denote Western contempt for the East, as in the title of Edward Said's book. It is of course an absurd misuse: the Orientalists did not spend time studying difficult languages and different cultures in order to look down on or colonise them. Robert Irwin's *For Lust of Knowing: The Orientalists and Their Enemies* (2006) convincingly presented Said as a phoney – the American word fits best – but we are stuck with his misuse (or abuse) of "Orientalist", which is now enracinated in the vocabulary even of my best students, and meaning, in effect, its own opposite. Andrei Pippidi's *Visions of the Ottoman World* deals with a time when European Orientalism was getting under way and you can only admire the enterprise that was often shown.

The fall of Constantinople coincided more or less with the invention of printing, and since, for the next century and a half, the Ottoman Empire was a huge threat to Europe, a great many books appeared about it. The Turks were to be encountered everywhere, and even in the later 14th century, manuscripts about them circulated, because the Pope called for a crusade (which ended in disastrous defeat at Nicopolis in 1396 and again at Varna in 1444). In the Mediterranean, from their capture of Otranto in 1480, and their threat to Rome itself, they contested mastery with Spain for more than a century; on land, they took Budapest, and threatened Germany and Poland; they even fought with the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean, and armed a ruler of Indonesia; and when Columbus set off in 1492 he took an Arabic interpreter. There was therefore a large market for books about the Turks, and a great number were published, in all languages between Poland and Portugal. The authors were an allsorts of merchants, diplomats, clergy, escaped slaves, gossips, Yellow-Peril hysterics, and long-term residents who had been captured but got on with the captors and just felt at home in Constantinople. The results are extraordinarily interesting and valuable for historians. The Venetian war of 1570–72 generated 358 publications, and that of 1593–1606 1,566, about a fifth of them German or Czech. The largest collection (10,000) of such books is that of Mr Ömer Koç, the catalogue of which is in preparation.

Andrei Pippidi is a Romanian historian with an extraordinary knowledge of them. He reads all the relevant languages, and writes English with distinction (he is the grandson of the classic Romanian historian Nicolae Iorga). However, his book is not just an extended descriptive catalogue. He has read the texts thoroughly, and means to put a pattern on them. How Europeans viewed (and view) "the Turk" is a good subject. There was, to start with, wild alarm that here was the Antichrist and a calamity predicted in the Book of Daniel, though Martin Luther calmed down when he reflected that the Pope would be the first victim (and in the siege of Leiden during the Dutch Revolt, placards read "Better Turk than Papist"). Luther reckoned in the end that "Christendom is being destroyed not by the Turks but by those who are supposed to defend it", and Erasmus thought in 1517 that Papal appeals for a crusade were just a trick for raising money. Among much empty attitudinising, there is here some solid observation and an astonishing degree of knowledge, especially given the difficulties of travel and language.

Pippidi's first real Orientalist was one Guillaume Postel, who occupied the first professorial chair of Arabic in Paris in 1540 when very young. He was François I's embassy-interpreter (Arabic, Syriac, Persian, etc) and then became an academic of sorts: one of those poly-linguistic characters to whom madness seems to have been near allied (he became a follower of a woman who claimed to see the Devil sitting in the middle of the Earth, and was imprisoned by the Inquisition).

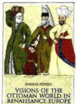
Orientalism seems to have attracted or perhaps even fashioned such eccentrics. It is curious that several of them (including Erasmus) thought that the Turks were "half-Christians", and the earlier Arab traveller Ibn Battuta had found their Islam astonishingly lax, what with wine, dancing and uncovered women. Theodore Spandugnino Cantacuzene, a Byzantine nobleman, noted the family connections between Ottoman grandees and Venetian exiles – they were first cousins, often enough, and Mehmed II used the nephews of the last emperor as admiral and as governor of the Balkans.

Some of these writers took a properly scholarly approach, understanding that the Ottoman Empire was a more successful state than their own (Francesco Sansovino in the mid-16th century is probably best, because he gives a wide description of Constantinople under the Turks, with a sober history, but there is also "George of Hungary", probably a Croat (1506–56), who had been captured and lived for 20 years all round the

Ottoman Balkans, and who closely observed religious and other practices. His book went through 43 editions. It is curious to see how the character of the European nations shows through even at that time (the same is true of painting: you can tell who is French and who is Italian, often enough). Here, German scholarship at its most prodigious is shown by one "Leunclavius" (Löwenklau), who is extraordinarily impressive (c1580). He ascribed the Ottoman success to their utter lack of lawyers, whom he regarded as a plague. Two Scots make an appearance. One, William Bruce (c1600), is the endlessly enterprising type who went on to make the British Empire, identify Sanskrit, etc. He taught law in Poland, became the French Huguenots' representative in Prague, went round Crimea and wrote about the Ottoman Empire. The other, William Lithgow (1609–11), just went round Europe, Salonica, Egypt, Aleppo and Crete having and making fun (he is especially comic about the trepidation of the French in Turkish waters).

There are, of course, also moralisers, though not nearly as many as would appear in the later 19th century, pouring off the steamships, finger upraised, to berate the Turks for this and that. In the main, the earlier writers rather liked Turks, though by 1600 they were beginning to see the weaknesses of the Ottoman structure, dependent upon strict price control and a military elite that could get out of hand.

Andrei Pippidi makes a very brave attempt to classify his voluminous volumes under the heading "Humanism", ie the Renaissance enterprise of understanding societies without reference to religion. This is the world of early-modern political thought, in which religious toleration of course had a role to play. The French thinker Jean Bodin understood that Turks and Russians were operating a system that became known (from a Balkan word) as "despotism", and the French in particular admired it, because it put an end to the chaos in which at the time they often lived. Pippidi cattily remarks that they did indeed get the strong government for which they sighed, in the shape of Louis XIV's tyrannical *ancien régime*, when the Bastille did indeed serve its purpose. Other writers examined Islam dispassionately, and some of them were downright dismissive of Greek Orthodoxy (Lithgow: "These Rascall Greekes… lyers, inconstant and uncivill"). Others wondered about the origins of the Turks: the Huns? Troy? There is too much even in this relatively short book for a review to do it proper justice, but as a guide to a wonderful set of books on a wonderful subject, it is also wonderful.



The Galata Tower square has been ruined by a big cheap-concrete shopping mall, but it is still recognisably an Italian piazza. The Tower itself goes back to 1384, and there are medieval Italian buildings all around, some of them – the Peter-Paul Church especially – in good shape, others not. It is said that there are plans to turn the area into an Italian Quarter to match the restored French one behind the Galatasaray Lycée, and this would be a good idea. The Tower is obviously Renaissance–Genoese, but it was put up, not against the Turks, but against the Venetians, with whom there was deadly competition for the Black Sea trade. At the time, each ran a formidable maritime empire. The Genoese cultivated the Turks, ferried them over to Europe in 1352 and remained neutral in the siege a century later.

However, Genoa was geographically too vulnerable to survive attacks from semi-savage Swiss mountaineers in the pay of the ruler of Savoy, whereas Venice, protected by lagoons, fended off greedy bumpkins, and went on dominating the Levant trade until she in turn lost to Dutch and English interlopers. Her commercial intelligence and diplomatic service was first-rate, and the records in her archives are an important source for study of the Ottoman Empire at its zenith.

Eric Dursteler's book is an academic study of the Venetian presence at this time. The Pope kept encouraging Venice to take up his cause, to defend Europe against Islam, but their motto was "first Venetian, then Christian" and they did business. *Venetians in Constantinople* shows how, on the whole, they got over religious differences as, on their side, the Ottomans also did: it is interesting to see how if they stayed for any length of time the traders (as also those of the English Levant Company) made Turkish friends, which did not happen to the same extent in, say, Morocco. At the time, the Orthodox Greeks also had good relations with the Turks, and when the ruler of Florence tried to liberate Chios, the inhabitants complained to the Pope. The Venetians, transferred to the Galata quarter, where there were wine and churches, were the best-organised foreigners. The era has left Turkey with a Venetian word for restaurant, *lokanta,* and Italy with a word for customs, *dogana*, which comes from *divan*.

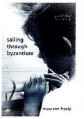
The Venetian representative, the Bailo, had grand headquarters, with a tennis court, where he had a 50-strong staff of secretaries, barbers and doctors, with a cohort of youths learning languages to become dragomans. One task was to free slaves, and to negotiate with the divan on this and commercial matters – the Bailo being a patrician, he generally handled these things well, besides being responsible for running a legal system. Mr Dursteler lists his activities – redeeming slaves (at 100,000, perhaps a fifth of the population of Istanbul around 1600) and checking on Italians who broke the convention that they should not give trade secrets or impart skills to the Turks. According to Halil İnalçık, most of the skilled artisans working in Kasımpaşa were Christian, and they (with Jews) supplied most of the jewellers and goldsmiths. It is often said that the Turks were not natural entrepreneurs, but this was not really true: they, especially the grandees, were keen traders, and there was a Fondaco dei Turchi in the Santa Croce quarter of Venice; in Bellini or Carpaccio paintings of that era you can see them, with their turbans and special clothes. Mr Dursteler has written a conscientious book based on difficult sources, and is just not lucky with his timing, in that he coincides with Professor Pippidi.

SECRETS AND LIES

Jason Goodwin

SAILING THROUGH BYZANTIUM

Maureen Freely
The Linen Press, £9.99



Maureen Freely's new novel, *Sailing Through Byzantium*, is a tense thriller evoking childhood in Istanbul in the early 1960s. Mimi is eight years old when her progressive, bohemian parents move to Istanbul to escape the oppressive atmosphere of McCarthy-era America. For Mimi it means leaving behind a safe and familiar world where grandmothers bake cakes and little girls eat Oreos and pledge allegiance to their flag.

Transplanted into an alien and confusing city, she struggles to make sense of new alliances and old allegiances, witness to an expatriate society whose lies and betrayals hover round the child like partygoers round the piano.

The piano in question is played by Baby Mallinson, a gay black American whose rambunctious improvisations deliver a bitter-sweet soundtrack to the book. Mimi's mother, Grace, has given up singing on her husband's insistence, but every now and then she can be persuaded to sing for her children and for Baby. 'Stormy Weather' is Mimi's song.

It is Grace who first encourages Mimi to use her eyes and ears as the family plan a Mediterranean cruise aboard a Soviet ship, and Grace who protects her, with wavering constancy, from her increasingly baffled and irritated father, a physicist of upright morals and little humour.

An old family friend, Mr Guttman, has given Mimi a sketchbook as a parting present. As Mimi learns to draw, her sketchbook becomes a record of the people and situations she encounters, beginning with a sequence of mishaps with a fire extinguisher when she is waitressing for the Admiral and his wife. Mimi's loss of innocence is expressed in the dawning realisation that the grown-ups who claim to admire her talent are, for the most part, insincere.

One by one, her parents' friends are penetrated by Mimi's precocious gaze. Pinned to the pages of the sketchbook, their motives and relationships are woven into a compelling narrative composed of half-truths and suppositions. Before long she is using lemon juice as invisible ink to scrawl the secret comments and reports that accompany her drawings. There's the glamorous Nella, with her slim, brown legs and officious husband, Rex; the starchy admiral and his appealing Quaker wife, who comes to Mimi's rescue when she's sent off to school again without a decent lunch; Mimi's older friend, Dora, who peddles unreliable gossip collected by her mother, a freelance journalist; and of course the enigmatic party of Turks, Russians and Americans who assemble on board the Soviet ship, the Felix Dzhershinsky, en route for Egypt.

Freely has an ear for dialogue, and her sly humour stalks the pages of this novel. When Baby questions why the girls are named after consumptive opera heroines, Mimi's mother crisply reminds him that "'Mimi and Violetta didn't die, because they were actresses. After the curtains went down, they left the stage, stepped out of the tragedy that had produced such beauty, and went on to fabulous feasts, to be fêted by suitors and sycophants. They escaped from their grasp to sail off to sing other operas, in the other great cities of the world.'

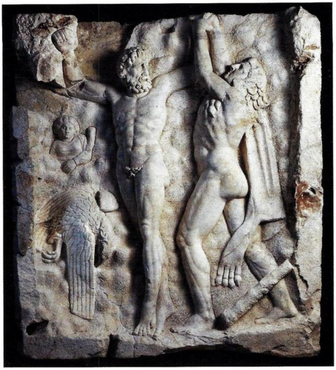
'Now that's what I call fancy footwork,' Baby said."

Mimi's fears, and her efforts to contain them, weave themselves into a tautly paced plot that culminates in the Cuban missile crisis, marked by her parents with an End of the World Party as Kennedy's deadline runs out. In a drily restrained allusion to an offstage drama, never articulated, Mimi's younger sister is being regularly abused by a workman on her way to school; but nobody notices, Mimi least of all, as they all focus their attention on their love lives, their lies and the climax of the Cold War.

Freely's feeling for the period is spot-on: there is not a false note. Wild parties on the Bosphorus are punctuated by the sinister tremors of huge Soviet ships passing through the straits, black shadows which slowly block the lights from the Asian shore. Mimi learns and understands too much, and yet too little: the reader is kept guessing, but is never let down.

Finely calibrated, compassionate and compellingly observed, *Sailing Through Byzantium* is a triumph.

The writer and historian Jason Goodwin's fifth Yashim adventure, 'The Baklava Club', will be published in 2014



SCULPTURAL BEAUTY: 1ST-CENTURY RELIEFS FROM APHRODISIAS

MONUMENT TO BEAUTY

Patricia Daunt

APHRODISIAS VI
The Marble Reliefs from the Julio-Claudian Sebasteion

RRR Smith
Verlag Philipp von Zabern, €89.90

This masterpiece of scholarship, from the Lincoln Professor of Art and Archaeology at Oxford University, presents a full publication of the first-century reliefs excavated at Aphrodisias in Caria and now exhibited in the Aphrodisias Museum. The focus is a complete documentation and understanding of the 80-odd reliefs in their local context and their monumental setting. The work elucidates the architecture and archaeology of the reliefs, the provincial representation and cult of the Roman emperor and the changing meaning of Greek mythological images. Meanwhile the abundant illustrations bring home the sheer beauty of the sculptor's art. A fine achievement.

EXILE IN PARADISE

Rupert Scott

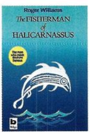
THE FISHERMAN OF HALICARNASSUS

Roger Williams
Bilgi Publishing, TL14

Forty years after his death, Cevat Şakir Kabaağaçlı, the "Fisherman of Halicarnassus", remains a figure of reverence in Bodrum. The main street carries his name, quotations from his work adorn billboards, a small museum dedicated to his memory has recently opened in Bodrum Castle, and his bronze bust stands outside the Belediye, surveying myriad gulets in Bodrum harbour. He is remembered as a novelist, a raconteur and a pioneer of the *mavi yolculuk*, the "blue voyage".

For non-readers of Turkish the cult of the Fisherman has always been difficult to share, as so little of his work has been translated – not even his autobiography, *Mavi Sürgün* (*The Blue Exile*). So this very readable book, though less of a biography than a broader celebration of Bodrum and the Turquoise Coast, is welcome.

Cevat's life was colourful, to say the least. Born in 1890 into a prominent Ottoman family (his father was Mehmet Şakir Pasha, a historian and diplomat; his uncle, Ahmed Cevat Şakir Pasha, grand vizier from 1891 to 1895; his mother a Cretan child-bride), he studied at Oxford then in Rome, returning to Turkey in 1913. But the following year he was convicted of shooting his father and sentenced to 14 years in jail, but released after seven. In 1925 he again found himself on the wrong side of the authorities (now those of the Turkish Republic) and was sentenced to three years' internal exile for seditious writing.



He had the good fortune to serve the first half of this sentence in Bodrum, where the Castle, which would

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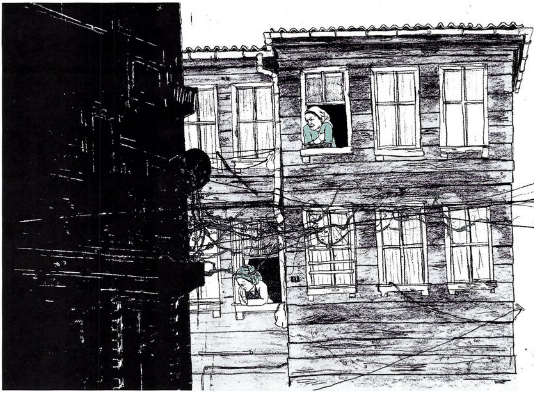
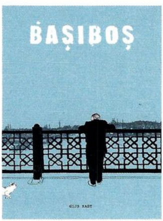
Enchanted by his new home, he stayed for most of the next 30 years. The climate, the beauty of the sea and of nature, the hospitality of the inhabitants, and their tolerant, broadly secular outlook on life, appealed to him. He saw Bodrum's population as heirs to an Anatolian civilisation thousands of years old and developed a personal philosophy of Blue Anatolian Humanism which saw Anatolia as the true home of Mediterranean culture. He bought a small boat and would explore the coast, pulling up in convenient bays and sleeping under the stars.

Bodrum was far from a typical village in southwest Anatolia at the time. Around half the population were Cretan Muslims, who had come to Bodrum as refugees in the early years of the century and then through the Exchange of Populations of 1923. The Cretans were seafarers; it was their culture Cevat found inspiring, and that is the subject of most of his novels and short stories. How this reality fits with Blue Anatolian Humanism is not clear, but the Fisherman was not a man to be troubled by inconvenient detail.

Cevat Şakir can be compared to European writers of the same era, who described life in other parts of the Mediterranean or southern Europe – such as Gerald Brennan in Spain, or Carlo Levi, exiled to Eboli in southern Italy. But until more of his work is published in other languages he will remain something of an enigma for non-Turks.

This book is about more than the Fisherman of Halicarnassus. It is a celebration of this coast and aspects of its history. It is a delightfully eccentric mix of the author's and the Fisherman's enthusiasms – underwater archaeology, sponge diving, Herodotus, ecology, tombstones, gulets, Homer's Odyssey... And it will enhance the holidays of the thousands of people who now take their own *mavi yoculuk* every year in comfortable gulets.





ISTANBUL REDRAWN

Merijn Schepens

Başıboş
Gijs Kast
De Harmonie, £16.99

The grey-clad, grim-faced Turk who sells vibrantly coloured ladies' underwear at the market. The shaggy street cat, weaving its way through the neighbour's garden fence. The friendly face of a wizened elderly lady, each line in her face telling stories of lifetimes ago. One wouldn't give these scenes a second glance if one passed them on the street. But perhaps it takes a fresh mind, an unbiased wanderer, to remind us of the beauty in these simple, everyday moments.

Gijs Kast, a young Dutch illustrator, wandered round Istanbul for six months, simply observing (hence the title: *başıboş* is Turkish for footloose). The result is an illustrated documentary in which you can almost smell, hear and taste the city. Rather than the tourist's view, it shows the real Istanbul, unveiled and caught unawares.

As an avid lover of pen-and-ink illustrations, it warms my heart to see works such as these finally accepted as high art. In the days when illustrations were just used to accompany texts, make political statements or simply entertain with a three-picture gag, the art form was often associated with children's stories or comic strips and its reputation was low. Thankfully, illustrators can now express whatever is on their minds, without limitations. Kast shows this brilliantly, drawing out the beauty in the everyday, the mundane, and turning it into art.

As a graphic art, illustration lends itself to a form of expression very different from the written word or the painted canvas, but combining the best of both these worlds. Kast knows his medium, using composition and the interplay of light and dark to capture the imagination. His work, though mostly consisting of line drawings, is varied and exciting, sometimes hinting at a clever observation with a splash of colour. Perhaps it is a statement he would like to make, or an interesting contrast he wants to share. Either way, the portraits, patterns and street views are both entertaining and thought-provoking.

I myself have sadly not been to Istanbul, so it is interesting to see the city observed by an outsider from the inside. Yet these images do not seem foreign. Somehow the feeling is one of recognition. By depicting the city without gloss or shine and allowing it to speak for itself, Kast manages to bring Istanbul close. Perhaps we should all stop living at a hundred miles an hour and take time simply to observe our surroundings. Who knows what beauty we might find?

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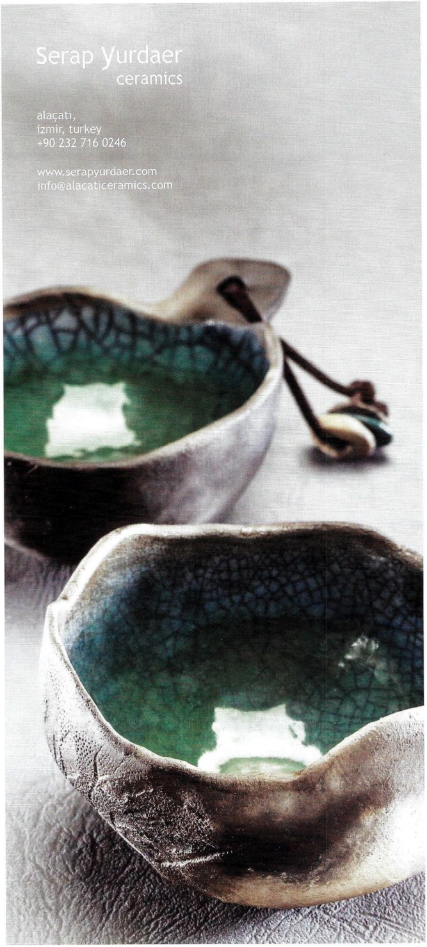

Spoilt for choice?

By Tim Cornwell

Two major art fairs in Istanbul, less than two months apart, vying for attention and multi-million sales; it would have been unheard of a few years back. It happened in 2013, and it's happening again next year. There are two views among city galleries of the rivalry between Contemporary Istanbul, firmly planning its ninth edition for November 2014, and newcomer ArtInternational, pledging to return in late September after an A-list first outing. One: that they will carve out competing but complementary roles. The other: that one must move to the spring, and give Istanbul's galleries and artists some breathing pace. "Everyone is wondering," says one Istanbul gallerist, "how both fairs will continue."

Contemporary Istanbul (95 galleries, about 50 Turkish) claimed 72,000 visitors to the Istanbul Congress Centre in downtown Maçka this year. Organisers suggested two-thirds of 3,000 works worth $92 million were sold; exact figures were not forthcoming, and they put no price on total sales.

ArtInternational (62 galleries, just ten Turkish) had far fewer visitors to the Haliç Congress Centre, at the top of the Golden Horn, reporting 4-5,000 on opening day – but a selective choice of exhibitors and international backers helped produce "an estimated €21 million in known sales". Powerhouse collectors included HH Prince Fahad bin Bandar al Saud and Sheikha Hoor al-Qasimi; top sales included Anish Kapoor's *Untitled*, 2011 alabaster for £850,000.

More broadly Contemporary Istanbul, for a new collector of Turkish art, say, had the fun of the fair: plenty of variety, lower prices, lots of punters; lots of stuff to hang on the wall. ArtInternational is using a selection panel of Turkish and foreign gallerists to aim a cut above in the contemporary market; the talks line-up, and the international offerings, were rated stronger. Interesting, perhaps, that in London, Frieze Masters, the new strand of Frieze stretching back to Old Masters or ancient art, has been a considerable success; would export rules allow anything similar to emerge here?

Contemporary Istanbul had staged a last-minute legal challenge against ArtInternational's use of "Istanbul" in its name. Both say emphatically they are coming back next year, with no compromise on dates. ArtInternational won't get a lift from the Istanbul Biennial, but it will be staged on a weekend.

Some galleries grouse about the prospect of choosing, and even paying twice for space, at two fairs. But Moiz Zilberman, owner and director of Galeri Cda projects gallery, one of the few Turkish galleries represented at both, was emphatically positive. "Both fairs have been very successful for us; in ArtInternational we sold well to numerous international collectors, mainly from the Middle East, and we secured a solo museum exhibition for one of our artists," he said.

"In Contemporary Istanbul we had a great volume of sales to Turkish collectors, many of them new clients for the gallery. We also had a lot of new visitors to the gallery as a result of the fair. I think there is a niche for both fairs and I'd like to see them capitalise on their differences and unique offerings."

RAMPA Istanbul also opted for both. Says spokesman Üstüngel İnanç: "There were some big names, some big galleries at both of the fairs, and with pictures going up to €250,000... Just one picture at that price secures transportation, rent for the fair. "This is a promising thing for international galleries to come back to Istanbul for one of these fairs. If the economy is on track, and people continue to invest in art, I think both will do better in the future." ◆

Tim Cornwell is a freelance journalist and arts writer; tim.cornwell@hotmail.com. Online arts reports, cornucopia.net/blog

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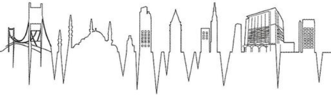

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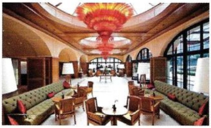

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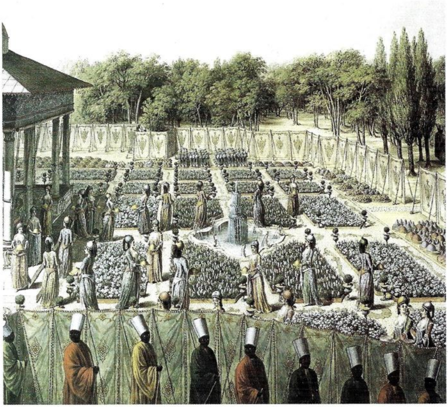
A CITY OF SECRET GARDENS

When David Wheeler set out to satisfy his craving to explore Turkish gardens, he was guided by a diverse cast of committed Istanbul citizens. What he discovered were myriad horticultural havens, from Byzantine market gardens to Ottoman cemeteries, from wooded Bosphorus yalis to riotous urban parks — many of them under imminent threat



Graceful harem ladies in an Ottoman garden, by Nicholas de l'Espinasse (1734–1808)

FALKENBERG COLLECTION

Back in March 2011, in what now seems an impossibly ambitious undertaking, I was camera-hunting rare irises on the Golan Heights and looking at gardens in Tel Aviv, Haifa and Jerusalem. It was the first research trip for a book I wanted to write on gardening in the Levant – from Alexandretta (modern-day Iskenderun) in southeast Turkey, to Alexandria in northern Egypt, taking in Lebanon, Jordan and Palestine. The epicentre of my proposed opus would be the Fertile Crescent, involving long stays in Syria over the next few years. Well, we know what happened there… and the project was necessarily abandoned.

I couldn't, however, turn my back entirely on that part of the world, and regret was slowly overtaken by excitement and intrigue as I recalled a dawn glide down the Bosphorus in the autumn of 2008. Through binoculars from the deck of a small cruise ship returning from Ukraine (lecturing on gardens as part of the ship's onboard cultural itinerary) I marvelled at numerous old houses and yalıs, shaded by cedars and pines of venerable splendour, suggesting the existence of secluded and perhaps little-known gardens.

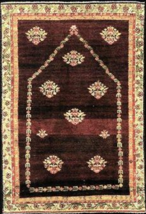
Long-term commitments prevented any immediate return to Turkey but in the spring of 2012, as leaves on Istanbul's plane trees slowly unfurled, I began the prospect of writing about its public parks and gardens, its threatened *bostans* (community vegetable gardens), hoping primarily to discover a cache of private horticultural havens struggling for supremacy in the concrete jungle or at verdant ease along the Bosphorus shores. While my focus is mainly post-Ottoman I cannot ignore gardens surviving from earlier times or, where hallowed trees still stand, cemeteries and mosques, setting my own boundaries north and south, from the Black Sea to the Princes Islands.

As a stranger, armed with little more than a Turkish dictionary, a map and a clutch of city guidebooks, I began my quest. Unlike the many countries where for more than a decade I have led specialist garden tours, Turkey could not provide a ready-made list of "must-see" gardens. I was starting from scratch in a city where, from a casual glance, any serious gardening seemed to have stopped abruptly a hundred years ago. Yet, so rich was that Ottoman heritage that I refused to believe I couldn't find enough to satisfy my own Turkish garden cravings – let alone those of today's many tourists thirsty for foliage and flowers.

With just two days left in Istanbul on that first extended trip, I went to Koç University to meet Scott Redford, who began to unlock doors on my behalf: most importantly that of Nihat Gökyiğit.

If, as an elderly Turkish gentleman sipping tea near Taksim Square told me, "a man can remember a woman with a single flower", how much more romantic is it to recall her with a whole garden – more than 80 acres of it? Such is the gesture made by the businessman and philanthropist Nihat Gökyiğit in memory of his late wife, Nezahat, and you would be forgiven for thinking it the act of a bejewelled grandee from the Ottoman Empire's glittering past.

But Nihat Bey is alive and as well as any man in his late eighties can be. On my last full day in the city we met at his office, which he frequents, though far beyond retirement age, as chairman of the board of Tefken Holding, Turkey's largest firm of construction engineers. We became acquainted over toasted sandwiches and tea before setting off across the Bosphorus to the Nezahat Gökyiğit Botanic Garden (NGBG), a miracle of entrepreneurial horticulture under the directorship of Adil Güner, straddling – improbably – the intersection of two thundering motorways amid a forest of



EQUALLY EXCITING IN A MUSEUM OR A MODERN HOME

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DAVID WHEELER WITH NIHAT GÖKYIĞIT (RIGHT), WHO TURNED EIGHT ISLANDS OF A MOTORWAY INTERSECTION ON THE ASIAN SIDE OF ISTANBUL INTO A GLORIOUS 32-HECTARE BOTANIC GARDEN

new apartment buildings and the recently completed Mimar Sinan Mosque at Ataşehir, some 20km from the city centre.

Among the NGBG's glories are the tunnels that connect its various sections, each one an island, each devoted to different styles of gardening and different kinds of plants. One, perhaps 100 metres long, displays reproductions of pieces shown at the Istanbul 2010 European Capital of Culture exhibition. Subtly yet forcefully, each picture demonstrates Turkey's universal exploitation of floral (especially tulip) and foliar imagery – from both realistic and stylised botanical illustration to landscape and miniature paintings, ceramics, clothes and shoes, soft furnishings, furniture, domestic and marine architecture, jewellery, clocks and tableware. All human needments are embodied, beyond life itself too, in the decoration of tombstones and, chillingly, such instruments of death as daggers, swords and gunstocks. The Ottomans were obsessed by plants and flowers and the skill of its artists and craftsmen was unrivalled. (Doubters might start with Orhan Pamuk's *My Name Is Red*.)

For an authoritative account of the Empire's horticultural brilliance there's Nurhan Atasoy's *A Garden for the Sultan* (Kitapyayınevi, 2011), a book of great beauty and learning. Present-day Turkish designers are free from the confines of what Professor Atasoy describes as being "Ottoman" gardens seen partly in the Islamic mould. "In their westward migrations to seek land that was more fruitful than the arid steppes of Central Asia," she says, "the Turks brought with them many of their ancient traditions" and, one might add, many plants from countries plundered en route. "Anatolia," the professor explains, "is a land-bridge linking the flora of southern Europe on the one hand and that of southwest Asia on the other."

Today's Istanbul gardeners, in a climate sweetened by lapping water on three sides, can successfully grow a range of plants from two mighty continents, plus almost anything from their own catalogue of native flora, richer by far than any found in neighbouring states. Moreover, foreign travel, books and magazines are influencing a younger generation of garden designers, especially those hired by private clients (who may not be Turkish) or who seek merely to green-up an urban roof terrace.

Regrettably, an overcrowded Istanbul cannot provide new houses with large individual gardens, although in a meeting with Ihsan Şimşek, head of the city's parks department, I was assured that current and proposed developments are being given recreational green spaces.

I have now made detailed notes about some of Istanbul's better-known palace gardens (supremely Topkapı) and the city-owned Yıldız and Emirgan parks, where a vibrant style of municipal bedding-out appears to please the visiting hordes. Emirgan Park is lately revived by the conversion of old brick stables and carriage houses to accommodate the new Istanbul Lale Vakfı (Tulip Foundation): in its grounds the famous Tulip River is replanted each autumn with thousands of bulbs in advance of the citywide annual Tulip Festival.

I spent time at Istanbul University's now sadly doomed 1930s Alfred Heilbronn Botanic Garden by the Süleymaniye Mosque, on a prized (and therefore super-valued) site overlooking the Golden Horn. Up in the Belgrade Forest, near Bahçeköy, a 45-minute Number 42 bus ride from Taksim Square, I combed the paths that delineate the species-rich Atatürk Arboretum in the company of the botanist Rahim Anşim. Within the book-lined walls of Nurhan Atasoy's city-centre apartment I learned how today's gardening is linked to the past, and from designer Gürsan Ergil, one of whose latest commissions is a garden for the new Turkish Embassy in Mongolia, I took the pulse of contemporary horticultural trends.

If those were some of my sunnier moments, then my darkest hour was spent on the Saturday afternoon of June 15 in Gezi Park. Threats to these few acres and their indispensable shade trees triggered the "riots" that much hampered my second summer visit this year. Yet, with the memory of teargas in my eyes I am eager to return, to trawl the city again, to peep behind locked gates and over high walls, to talk to gardeners young and old – all in search of Istanbul's elusive parks and gardens. ◆

David Wheeler is the founding editor of the international English-language gardening quarterly Hortus (www.hortus.co.uk). In 2009 he was presented with the Royal Horticultural Society's Gold Veitch Memorial Medal

For more information about the Nezahat Gökyiğit Botanic Garden, ngbb.org.tr/en/. Two illustrated books about Ottoman gardens are available from cornucopia.net: 'Gardens and Flowers of Istanbul' (the catalogue of the botanic garden's poster exhibition), at £25, and 'A Garden for the Sultan', by Nurhan Atasoy, at £60

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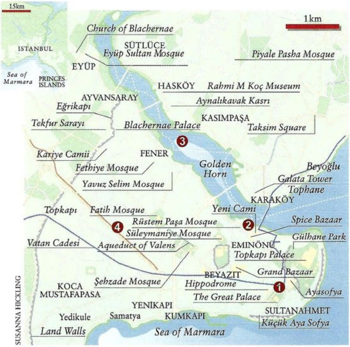
Polychrome, underglaze-painted, stoneware Iznik plate.
Photograph by Fritz von der Schulenburg

ISTANBUL UNWRAPPED

THE FIRST IN A SERIES OF CONNOISSEURS' GUIDES



SUSANNA HICKLING

ISTANBUL may be on the cusp of irreversible change, its great heritage under threat, but it remains a city that enthrals. This special issue, CORNUCOPIA's 50th, celebrates its Ottoman and Byzantine legacy, focusing on the Old City and the Golden Horn – from the great palaces and mosques to tantalising bazaars and forgotten backwaters

Contributions from Andrew Finkel, Robert Ousterhout, Rose Shepherd, Caroline Finkel, Susana Raby, Tim Cornwell, Victoria Khroundina, Tony Barrell, Hilary Stafford-Clark

THE SULTAN'S CITY

FROM PALACE TO BAZAAR

① Take in the Topkapı, where the sultans held sway in secluded grandeur. Saunter round Sultanahmet and the Hippodrome: make the most of the mosques, monuments and museums. Get the buzz of the bazaar: where to snap up covetable collectables and cheerful bargains

THE PORT, MARKETS AND MOSQUES

② Give yourself over to the grit and bustle of Eminönü's waterside markets, then ascend to Sinan's sublime hilltop mosques – the awesome Süleymaniye and the haunting Şehzade. In their shadow is the exuberantly tiled Rüstem Pasha Mosque

THE GOLDEN HORN

③ Discover a horn of plenty: weave your way through the old walled city, or let the ferry take the strain. From the grey power of the Yavuz Selim Mosque and the sacred shrine of Eyüp, to a vast museum of industrial nostalgia and the sultan's favourite hideaway, there is much to captivate

BYZANTINE CITY

BYZANTIUM'S LEGACY

④ Learn the story of the thousand-year Byzantine Empire told in ten objects. Experience Ayasofya's 'terrifying beauty'; the Church of the Chora, a small pretender; the Kalenderhane, the mosque that kept its marbles. Find splendid solitude in the chapel of the Pammakaristos

THE SULTAN'S

FROM PALACE TO BAZAAR 46-75

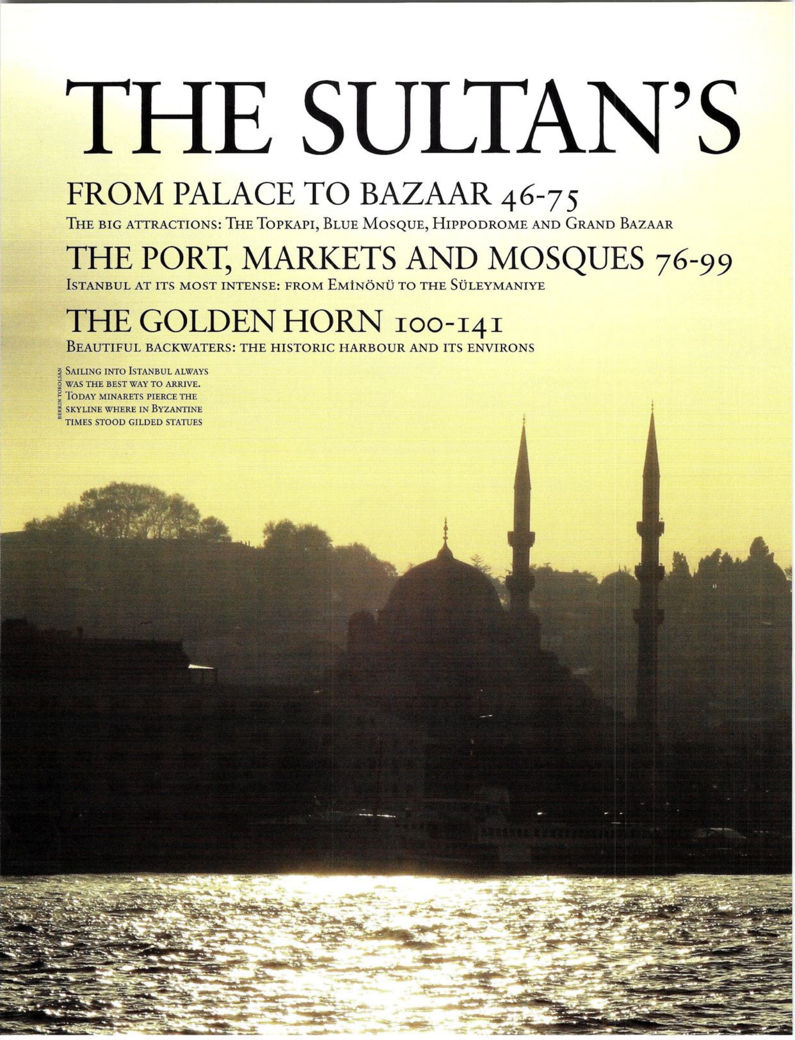
The big attractions: The Topkapi, Blue Mosque, Hippodrome and Grand Bazaar

THE PORT, MARKETS AND MOSQUES 76-99

Istanbul at its most intense: from Eminönü to the Süleymaniye

THE GOLDEN HORN 100-141

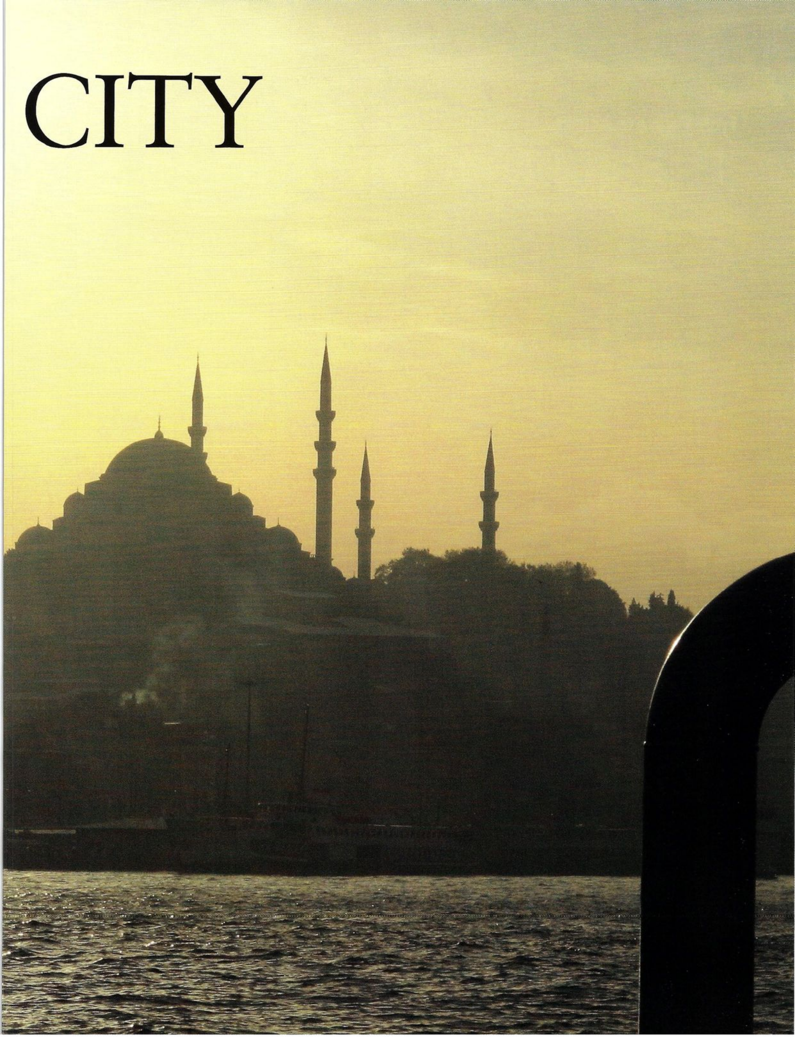
Beautiful backwaters: the historic harbour and its environs



Sailing into Istanbul always was the best way to arrive. Today minarets pierce the skyline where in Byzantine times stood gilded statues

BERRIN TOROLSAN

CITY

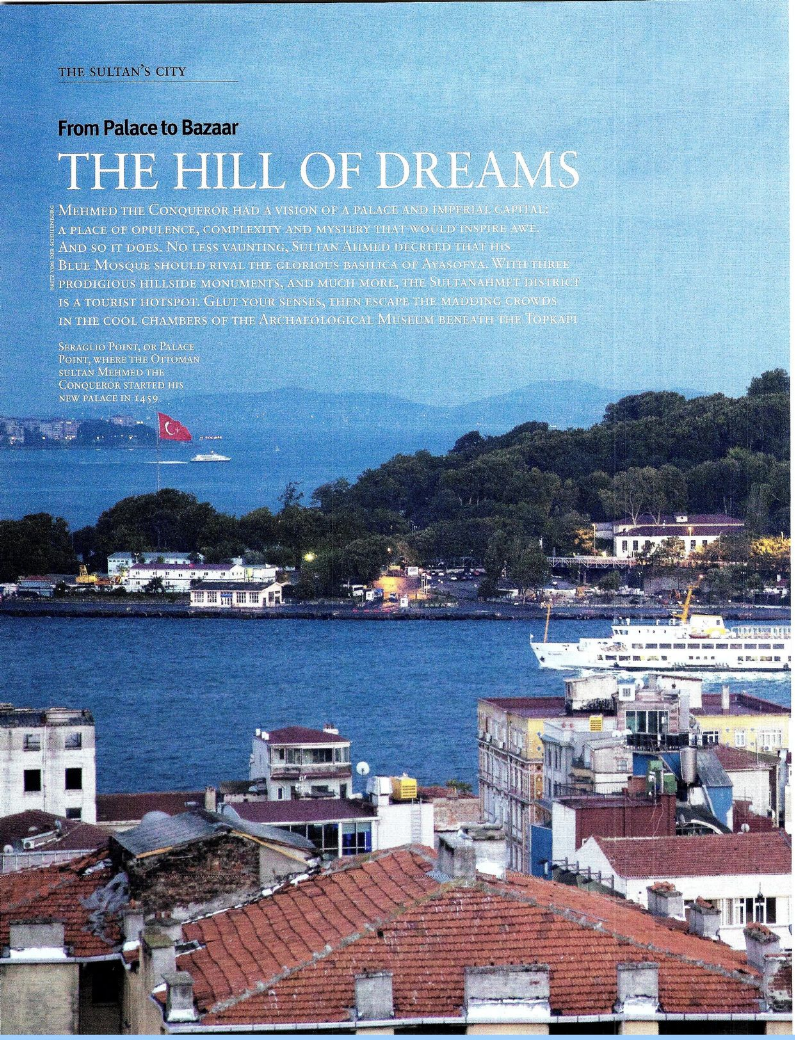


From Palace to Bazaar

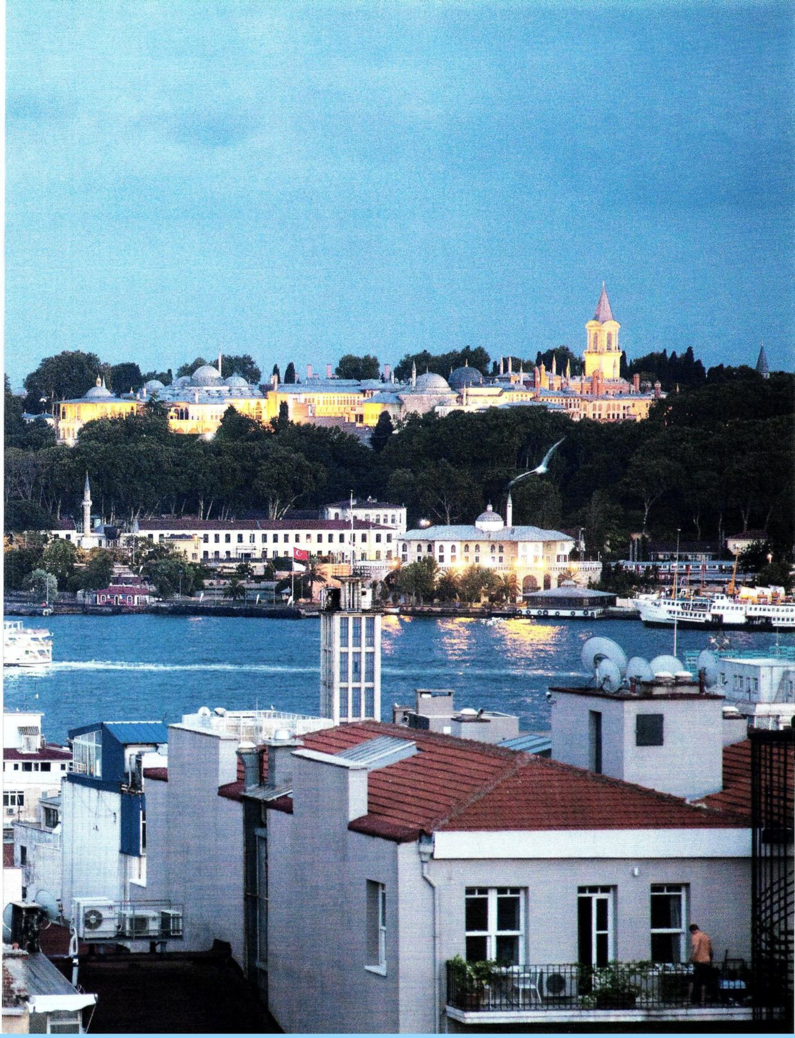
THE HILL OF DREAMS

FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG

Mehmed the Conqueror had a vision of a palace and imperial capital: a place of opulence, complexity and mystery that would inspire awe. And so it does. No less vaunting, Sultan Ahmed decreed that his Blue Mosque should rival the glorious basilica of Ayasofya. With three prodigious hillside monuments, and much more, the Sultanahmet district is a tourist hotspot. Glut your senses, then escape the madding crowds in the cool chambers of the Archaeological Museum beneath the Topkapi



Seraglio Point, or Palace Point, where the Ottoman sultan Mehmed the Conqueror started his new palace in 1459

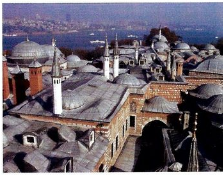


Topkapı Palace

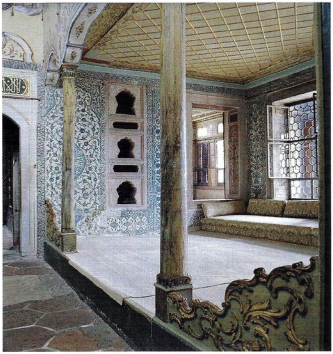
STONY HEART OF EMPIRE

WITHIN THE DEEPEST REACHES OF THE PALACE LIES THE VERY SEAT OF THE SULTANS' POWER. CLAIRE KARAZ SHOWS THE WAY. PHOTOGRAPHS BY FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG

Mehmed II started building the Topkapı, on the site of the old Byzantine acropolis overlooking the Golden Horn and the Sea of Marmara, in 1459, six years after his conquest of Constantinople. Known as the New Palace until the 19th century, when it acquired the name of Topkapı (Cannon Gate), it is not a palace in the traditional European sense but a complex of low buildings and pavilions, kiosks and courtyards, to which Mehmed's successors continued to add. For almost 400 years it was the principal residence of the Ottoman sultans, as well as the seat of government and the



LEFT Looking through the Topkapı's Gate of Felicity to the Audience Chamber
ABOVE The domed roofs of the Harem, with the Bosphorus beyond, viewed from the Tower of Justice



setting for state occasions and royal entertainments. It was a self-contained city that most of the inhabitants rarely left. Today, as a museum, it is a huge tourist attraction that merits several visits, and a repository for important Muslim relics.

THE IMPERIAL GATE

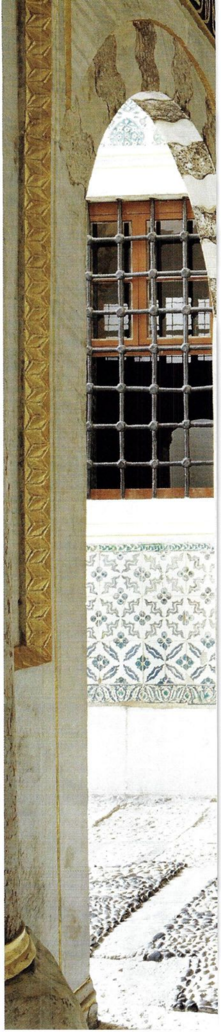
What I find so appealing about the Topkapı is the importance placed on intimate pavilions, on nature and on views. Now as then, visitors enter through the **Imperial Gate (Bâb-ı Hümâyûn)** and process through a series of low buildings ranged round a string of courtyards, connected with galleries and passages, that become progressively secluded.

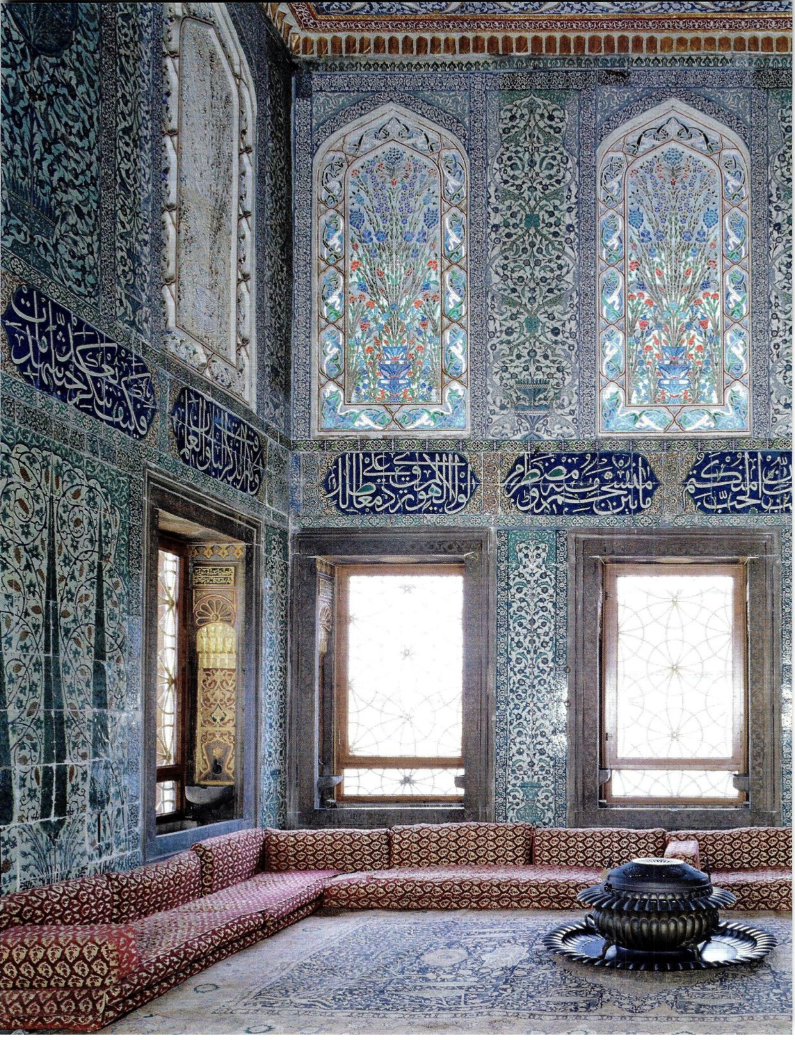
Impressive "mirrored" calligraphy within the arch of the gate compares entry to the palace to entering paradise. The foundation inscription tells us that Mehmed's palace was complete in 1478 and that he was the sultan of two continents, favourite of God on the two horizons, monarch of the world and so on. Above the gateway is the *tuğra*, or seal, of a later sultan, Mahmud II (1808–39).

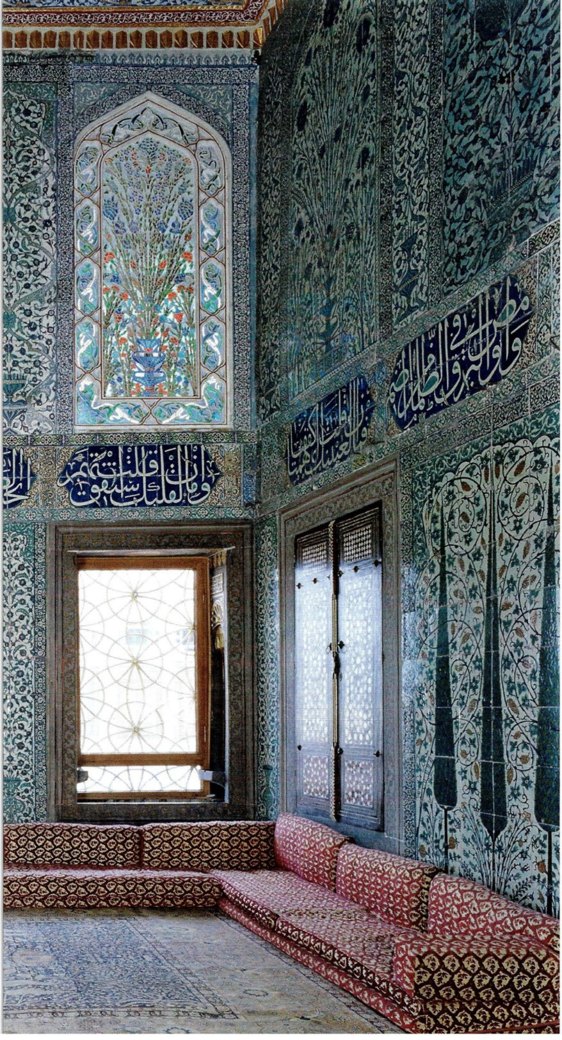
THE FIRST COURTYARD

On the left as you enter stands **Haghia Irene (Aya İrene)**, the fifth-century Byzantine church of Holy Peace, which the Ottomans used as an armoury and a handy source of fine old columns until there were no more. Imagine an open, treeless courtyard with workshops on either side where mats, carpets, books, bread and jewellery were made. Here, large numbers of people gathered and official visitors left their horses. At Mehmed II's funeral, it is said, 25,000 mourners congregated to join the procession to his place of burial. Executions were also held here, close to what is now the museum shop.

RIGHT THE ENTRANCE TO THE HAREM, WHERE THE BLACK EUNUCHS KEPT WATCH
TOP LEFT THE APARTMENT OF THE ALL-POWERFUL QUEEN MOTHER
LEFT THE PAVED COURTYARD OF THE FAVOURITES







THE GATE OF PEACE

With its fairytale towers, the **Gate of Peace (Bâb-üs Selâm)**, or Middle Gate, looks like part of a medieval castle. Add severed heads on the crenellations and you have the picture. Only official visitors, members of the Ottoman administration and court attendants – and of course the sultan on horseback – passed through this portal.

THE SECOND COURTYARD

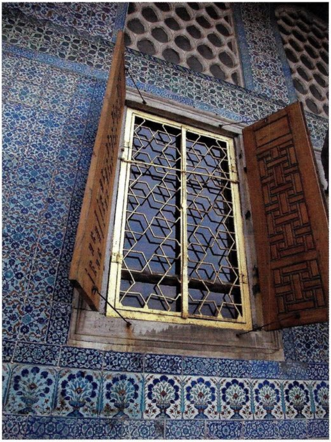
If the Gate of Peace looks medieval from the first courtyard, from this side it is distinctly Baroque. Look to the right, where two models of the palace are displayed in a glass case. The first shows the entire tip of the historic peninsula (Sarayburnu) and gives a sense of the layout of the palace.

On the right of the courtyard are the vast palace kitchens, which once fed thousands. They are closed to the public for now, but the view from the Sea of Marmara of dozens of chimneys gives an idea of the scale of the operation. After a great fire destroyed the kitchens in 1574, they were rebuilt by the imperial architect Sinan, who also expanded the Harem.

On the left are the **Tower of Justice**, once the city's highest building, and below it the **Divan**, where the viziers held council as the sultan listened behind a golden grille in the wall above, so that no one could tell whether or not he was there.

The **Treasury**, an eight-domed hall, is where money from the provinces was kept in vaults. Today it holds a display of weapons: Ottoman bows, quivers, quills, wicker shields and grooved swords, as well as beautiful helmets, ceremonial gold chamfrons for horses' heads, and the horsetail standards that appear as three

ONE OF TWO SUMPTUOUS ROOMS IN THE HAREM, BUILT FOR THE CROWN PRINCES, WITH STAINED-GLASS WINDOWS AND IZNIK TILES. IT WAS COOLED BY WATER FLOWING FROM SMALL STONE BASINS INTO THE WINDOW SILLS



vertical lines in the sultan's seal. In the porticoes are columns of many types of stone, all recycled from Byzantine buildings, but with distinctly Islamic honeycomb *muqarnas* capitals.

Some of the cypresses and oriental planes here are older even than the palace. Gone, though, are the many fountains that once played in the garden, and the aviaries of songbirds.

The Harem

The imperial Harem was one of the largest parts of the palace, with more than 400 rooms ruled over by the Valide Sultan (Queen Mother), who wielded both political and domestic power. The Harem housed hundreds of women – mostly slaves or captives and family members – as well as hundreds of eunuchs, who performed a whole range of administrative and personal duties. Pass through the sections where the eunuchs lived and were educated, then through the hallway to the **Courtyard of the Concubines**, to the **Valide's Rooms**, making sure to notice the cupboard doors inlaid with mother-of-pearl and tortoiseshell. Follow the black-and-white cobbled path from the **Valide Courtyard** to the Sultan's rooms.

Most sultans had four or five children. Murad III (1574–95) had more than 40 with as many women. **Murad's Bedchamber** – a domed pavilion and one of the few by Sinan to survive – would have been filled with light before later buildings blocked much of it out. Exceptional Iznik tiles remain: above the conical fireplace hood is an arch of tiles with a cherry-tree motif; an inscription of the Koran's Throne Verse, white on cobalt blue, runs round the room.

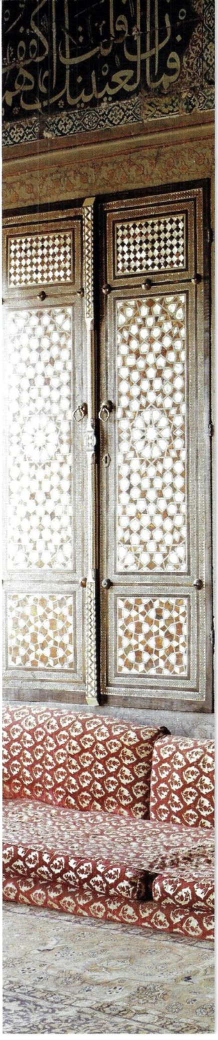
Continue to the not-to-be-missed **Fruit Room** of Ahmed III (1703–30), delightfully painted with fruit and flowers. Here you come to a dead end. Turn back through Murad's room to the twin **Rooms of the Şehzade** (Crown Princes), with their fine stained-glass windows. Then continue to the **Courtyard of the Favourites.** I like to look out towards the Golden Horn and down at the open pools (actually reservoirs) below Murad's pavilion and imagine the sultan taking refreshment there on a hot summer's day. The door out of the Harem opens into the Third Courtyard, opposite the Audience Hall and the Gate of Felicity. Only the sultan, pageboys and certain servants were allowed this far, and absolute silence ruled.

The Third Courtyard

Its domed roof makes the **Gate of Felicity (Bab-üs Saadet)** more Turkish than the others and more inviting. It is this gate that became "la Porta Sublime" or "the Sublime Porte", the term later used to denote the Ottoman government and the origin of the word "passport". A small knob on the pavement covers the spot where the Prophet's Holy Standard stood on ceremonial occasions.

Obstructing a view of the Third Courtyard is the **Audience Hall (Arz Odası,** or Hall of Petitions), which is surrounded by beautiful ancient columns. This is where the sultan would speak to his viziers and receive gifts from envoys, their voices discreetly muffled by the sound of water flowing from the fanciful tiered fountain on the left before you leave.

On the right of the courtyard is a **Pageboys' Dormitory**, now displaying items from the sultans' splendid wardrobe, from glorious tulip-motif kaftans, baggy silk trousers woven with gold and silver and talismanic shirts, right



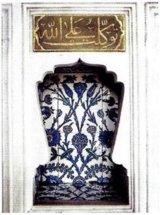
RIGHT AND ABOVE IN ONE OF THE CROWN PRINCES' ROOMS, THE IZNIK TILES, C1575, ARE A RIOT OF SPIRALLING TENDRILS AND CYPRESS TREES. GILDED WINDOWS OPEN ONTO THE COURTYARD OF THE FAVOURITES. EVEN THE EXTERIOR WALLS ARE LAVISHLY TILED

up to European-style military uniforms and fezzes.

Still on the right, in the domed rooms of the **Pageboys' Hamam**, you can marvel at objects from the Treasury: thrones (my favourite is the gold one adorned with peridots), rock-crystal pitchers, boxes encrusted with gold, rubies and emeralds, and the aigrettes that sultans wore in their turbans (more emeralds and rubies, plus pearls). The third room leads to an Italianate loggia with fantastic views of the Sea of Marmara and the Bosphorus. Mehmed II would surely have stood here to enjoy the outlook. Displayed in the last of these rooms is a must-see: the emerald-studded **Topkapı Dagger**, star of the 1964 heist movie *Topkapi.*

In the centre of the courtyard is the **Library of Ahmed III**, built in the Tulip Period in the early 18th century. Exquisite ivory-and-walnut shutters frame the windows, which look onto the garden, and there are marvellous *çintamani* wall tiles. I only wish there were a few cushions on the floor for visitors to relax.

Hanging in another **Pageboys' Dormitory**, on the left of the courtyard, are portraits of sultans. The one I find the most interesting, on the far wall, shows Selim III (1789–1807) on a golden throne at the Gate of Felicity with his entire entourage of viziers, eunuchs, janissaries and Islamic judges.



JÜRGEN FRANK

ABOVE A NICHE WITH A PRAYER: 'I HAVE PLACED MY TRUST IN GOD' RIGHT DELFT TILES, ALL THE RAGE IN THE 1750S, DECORATE THE HAREM'S AUDIENCE CHAMBER

The rooms just beyond are the **Sultan's Privy Chamber**, which holds Islam's most holy relics, the Holy Standard and the Holy Mantle of the Prophet, secreted in silver and gold boxes. Here too are the sword David used to sever Goliath's head, the rod of Moses (kept under the Byzantine emperors' throne), John the Baptist's arm and a big gold cap that once covered the Kaaba in Mecca. I always enjoy listening to the rhythms of the *hafız* reciting the Koran here.

THE FOURTH COURTYARD

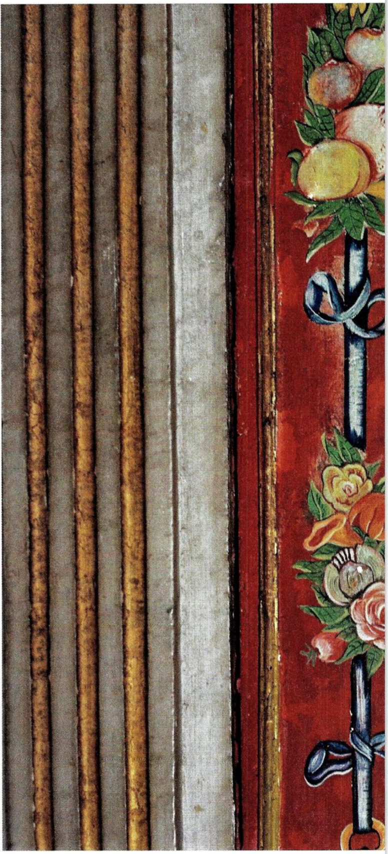
Here are the outer terraced gardens, where flowerbeds blaze with tulips of many colours in spring. Climb to the high terrace to admire the view over the Golden Horn from the delicate **İftar Pavilion.** Sultans could gaze at the setting sun here before breaking their fast in Ramazan.

There are three pavilions off this last terrace. In the **Baghdad Pavilion**, look for birds in the tiles. At the **Revan Pavilion**, admire the *opus sectile* (large mosaic) tiles on the exterior. And at the **Circumcision Pavilion**, count the number of motifs and sizes of tiles inside and out. Picture the sultan throwing coins from this terrace, and pageboys scrambling for them, as in the miniature paintings of Levni.

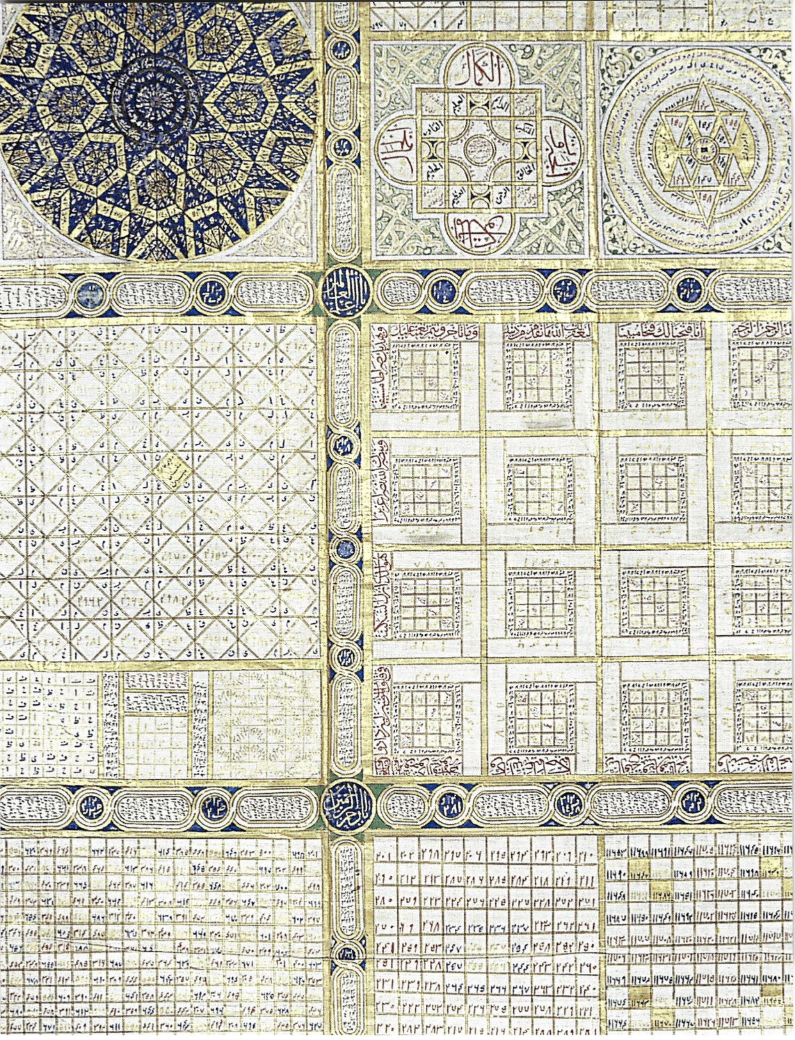
Nowadays the garden beyond the white wooden **Pavilions of Mustafa IV** has benches for people to sit and take a breather after sightseeing. Another option for a rest is the café facing the Sea of Marmara, just below the **Mecidiye Pavilion**: it was built in unmistakable Empire style by the Balyan family of architects in the 19th century. The café has admirable views and refreshments. ◆

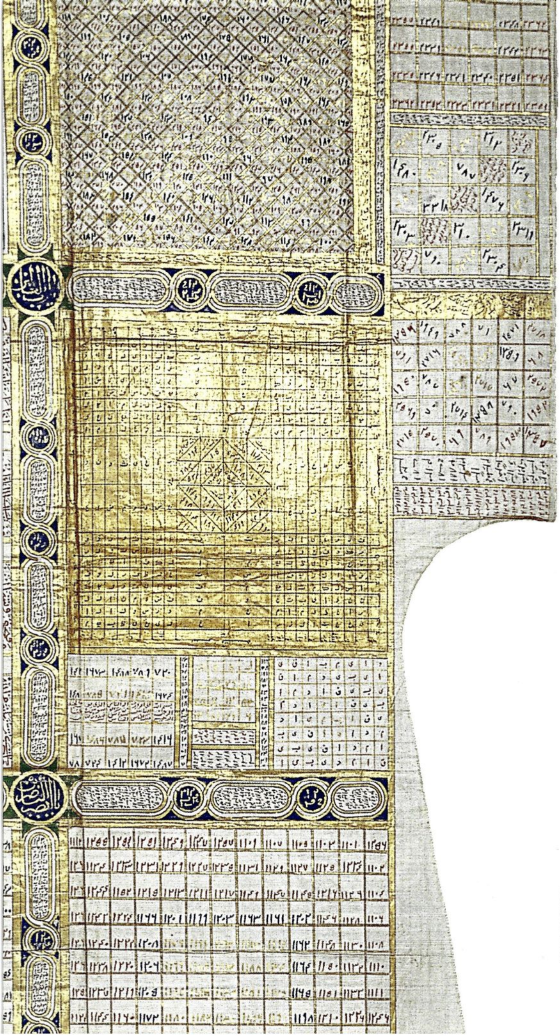
The Topkapı Palace Museum is open 9.30am–4.30pm. Closed Tuesdays. +90 212 512 0480.

Claire Karaz's pocket guide 'Topkapı Palace Inside and Out' (Çitlembik) is available from cornucopia.net, price £9.99



JÜRGEN FRANK





SONG OF THE SHIRT

The Ottomans were meticulous archivists. Each sultan's garments were carefully wrapped in labelled bundles (*bohça*) after his death. They included talismanic shirts invested with almost magical power, worn in times of sickness, on the battlefield or whenever divine protection was needed. All 87 of the palace's shirts are in Hülya Tezcan's book *Magic Shirts from the Topkapı Palace Collection* (2011).

The shirt with the most poignant story (left) is dedicated to Mehmed the Conqueror's ill-fated son the *şehzade* Cem Sultan. Prince Jem, as he was known to the West, challenged his brother Beyazıd to the throne. He was famed for his music and poetry. Even when war raged between them, the brothers wrote to each other in verse.

This shirt is of the most delicate cotton, chintzed in egg white to create a smooth, paper-like surface, then inscribed in red, blue and black inks with liberal quantities of gold leaf. The names of God, Koranic verses, astrological and other symbols are set out in geometric patterns.

An inscription calls it a "victory shirt" and verses from the 'Victory' chapter in the Koran frames the panel of 16 magic squares. A Persian horoscope tells us it was begun in the "57th minute of the fourth hour when the sun was in the 19th degree" on March 30, 1476, and finished four years later to the day.

Sadly, Cem never wore the shirt and the neck is unopened. In 1480 he lost his war of succession and fled to the West. First a guest, then a hostage, of the Pope, he was eventually poisoned in 1496.

TOPKAPI PALACE MUSEUM

A TALISMANIC SHIRT MADE FOR THE OTTOMAN PRINCE CEM SULTAN, ON SHOW IN THE TOPKAPI PALACE

The Ottoman heyday

THROUGH THE MISTS OF TIME

'ENVY OF KINGS AND HARBOUR OF VESSELS, MIGHTY FORTRESS...' THIS WAS THE ISTANBUL THAT EVLIYA ÇELEBI SET OUT TO DOCUMENT AFTER HE WAS VISITED BY THE PROPHET IN A DREAM IN 1630. CAROLINE FINKEL REVISITS SOME OF HIS FAVOURITE PLACES, OTTOMAN GLORIES UNCHANGED IN CENTURIES

To someone of historical inclinations who lives, as I do, on the Asian shore of the Bosphorus, crossing its waters offers the simple pleasure of being able to imagine that the destruction visited upon the fabric of the city is only a bad dream. Board the boat at Üsküdar and sit facing south to see, through the typically hazy air, the domes and slender minarets of Istanbul's greatest mosques lined up along the spine of the hill, with the green space of Seraglio Point completing the vista at its seaward end. This is a view that has not changed for centuries. It is one that Evliya Çelebi would have surveyed with pride as he went to and fro across the strait.

As the possibility of recapturing the atmosphere of the historical city slips irretrievably away, thankfully we can turn to an eyewitness account of how it once was. Evliya (Çelebi is a title meaning gentleman, not a name) may be better known for his travels to the corners of the Ottoman Empire and beyond, but before riding out on these distant journeys, he tells us, he explored the city on foot in 1631–32. This piqued his lust for travel and honed the descriptive powers that would find expression in his compendious masterpiece, the *Book of Travels*.

Evliya's father was the chief palace goldsmith, and Evliya himself was educated as a courtier and cavalryman in the Topkapı Palace. He lived in turbulent times: a stone's throw away, past the great mosque of Ayasofya, lay the Hippodrome, scene of much anti-government agitation in his day. Following in his footsteps, we will look through his eyes at a few of the sights he describes.

AN INSIDER AT THE PALACE

Evliya Çelebi extols the unrivalled site chosen by Mehmed the Conqueror for the Topkapı – "between the Black Sea and the White Sea" (Mediterranean) – ascribing the palace's original foundation to Solomon and later additions to Alexander the Great. He engagingly describes his life at court as a "raw and skinny youth", and his closeness to Murad IV (1623–40), who appreciated his talents as a musician and entertainer and designated him his "boon companion". Evliya gives a unique, insider's view of the education of a favourite in the palace school, and records his banter with the sultan, including allusions to Murad's conquest of Erevan in the Caucasus in 1635. The Revan Kiosk, with its panoramic view, was built to mark Murad's triumphant return to his capital, though Erevan was lost only three months after the building's completion.

ATMEYDANI (HIPPODROME)

For Evliya, the Hippodrome was a place of talismans such as the Serpent Column, believed to banish snakes. He writes that Selim II (1566–74) struck "the lower jaw of the western-looking head of the dragon" with his "bejewelled, merlin-headed mace", vitiating its power and allowing snakes to enter the city from the west. He also attributed magical properties to the Column of Constantine, and to the Egyptian Obelisk. The Hippodrome was the rallying point for insurrection. During his rare visits home, Evliya witnessed revolts fomented here in 1648 and 1651. The first ended with the deposition of Sultan Ibrahim (1640–48) and the killing of his favourites. The second was occasioned by the payment of Janissary salaries in debased coin by Evliya's patron, the grand vizier Melek Ahmed Pasha, and culminated in the pasha being dismissed, and Kösem Sultan (Murad IV and Ibrahim's mother) being strangled with her own hair.

THE SÜLEYMANİYE

A masterpiece by the incomparable Sinan inaugurated in 1558, the Süleymaniye dominates the skyline. Evliya employed superlatives to describe the mosque – its four porphyry columns brought from Egypt, the luminescence of its stained glass, its marble prayer niche and pulpit, its courtyards and soaring minarets. One day, he watched "ten Frankish infidels competent in the sciences of engineering and architecture", examining each element in detail. They threw up their hats and called "Maria, Maria!" When he enquired how they liked the Süleymaniye, they responded that it was a more perfect building than any they had seen in Europe.

MAHMUD PASHA HAMAM

Located on what is still the main thoroughfare from the Covered Bazaar to the port of Eminönü, the monumental double bath of Mehmed II's Serbian-born grand vizier, Mahmud Pasha, stands a short distance from his mosque and tomb. The water would have flowed to it across the Aqueduct of Valens. Only the men's section, with its elaborately carved entrance, remains. It is now used as shops, which mask its former splendour, but it is well worth a visit. As we would expect, given its proximity to the commercial heart of the city, Mahmud Pasha's bath was patronised by merchants. In his long description of the parade of the tradesmen of Istanbul in 1638, Evliya remarks that the bath-keepers were wealthy men, who took part in the parade "fully armed" and "mounted on pure-bred horses".

AQUEDUCT OF VALENS

When Mehmed II conquered Constantinople in 1453, one of his initial concerns was to breathe life into the desolate, dilapidated city. Evliya writes: "In the time of the infidels, there was no running water other than the 'Forty Fountains'" (a system that filled a number of covered cisterns) and "rainwater that flowed into five open cisterns". The availability of water was key, and Mehmed ordered it to be brought in from the countryside. The fourth-century Byzantine Aqueduct of Valens was repaired, becoming a vital part of the new Ottoman capital's water-distribution system. Evliya recounts that the aqueduct and existing channels had decayed by Süleyman's time, and when he consulted Sinan about restoring and augmenting it, the architect advised that Süleyman should think big: "My Sultan, if you line up purses of gold end to end, water flowing as abundantly as a great river, from a spring eleven hours west of Istanbul, can be made to reach the city." The ancient aqueduct (Bozdoğan Kemeri in Turkish) was accordingly repaired again, and Istanbul's water supply once more flowed across it.

YENİ VALİDE MOSQUE

Known simply as the New Mosque (Yeni Cami), the imposing mosque overlooking the port at Eminönü is a monument from Evliya's own time. He updated his description of the city to include it. In his youth the area was a Jewish settlement, established on the foundations of an unfinished mosque begun by Safiye Sultan, mother of Mehmed III (1595–1603). Evliya reports that the Great Fire of 1660 engulfed the area, revealing the underpinnings of the earlier structure, and presenting Turhan Sultan, the mother of Mehmed IV (1648–87), with the opportunity to make her mark at the heart of the commercial

BERRIN TOROLSAN

Magical Seraglio Point: Topkapi and its giant kitchen chimneys, in front of the domes and minarets of Ayasofya and the Blue Mosque

district. Her decision to build here forced the expulsion of the Jews to Hasköy, up the Golden Horn. Evliya wrote a chronogram (numerically coded verse) to celebrate the mosque's completion, reserving particular praise for its chandeliers, which he thinks perhaps the most magnificent in the Muslim world, and its "Persian and Cairene carpets, the like of which are not to be found in Chinese picture galleries".

Ahi Çelebi Mosque

The chief physician of the hospital in Mehmed the Conqueror's Fatih Mosque complex, Ahi Çelebi built his own small mosque on the Eminönü waterfront sometime before 1500. Almost opposite the Yeni Cami, it is of interest as the setting for the dream that confirmed Evliya in his desire to travel the world. One night in August 1630, as he "lay down on the pillow of lamentation… to a sleep of wish fulfilment", he dreamt he saw the Prophet among a crowded gathering of saints in this mosque. He commanded Evliya to make the call to prayer, and he was then brought before the Prophet. "As I shamelessly put my lips on that blessed hand, out of awe and dread, instead of '*Şefaat* [intercession], O Messenger of God!' I said, '*Seyahat* [travel]'."

The sheikh of the Mevlevi lodge in Kasımpaşa urged Evliya to "do your utmost to chronicle our dear Istanbul". And with this, he writes, "I begin the account of my birthplace, the envy of kings and harbour of vessels, mighty fortress of the province of Macedon, Istanbul."

Eyüp Sultan Mosque

Evliya relates how a "miraculous discovery" propelled Mehmed II to victory in his conquest of the city. In the course of the sultan's siege, Akşemseddin Efendi, his spiritual guide, lay down on his prayer mat to sleep in a dense forest, at a spot he believed to be the grave of the Prophet's standard-bearer, Eyüp el-Ensarî, who fell in an Arab siege of the city in AD 668–69. When Akşemseddin awoke, "his blessed eyes had become bowls filled with blood, his face was covered in sweat". He called Mehmed, saying "This place must be dug immediately." Akşemseddin and the sultan, with three dervishes, began to dig. Lying under a green stone slab, "they found Eyüp's body, after all these years, wrapped in his saffron-coloured shroud, as fresh as the day he was buried".

The shrine Mehmed built was visited by both high and low in search of blessings. It became the place where sultans were girt with a sacred sword upon accession. The district developed as a "city of the dead", the resting place of a handful of notables powerful enough to establish their complexes and tombs there, and those interred unassumingly on the hill above.

Evliya sought consolation at Eyüp when his father died and before setting out on his circuitous pilgrimage in 1671. Next to the saint's tomb is that of Hacı Beşir Ağa, the powerful chief black eunuch responsible for bringing the manuscript of the *Book of Travels* to Istanbul from Cairo, where Evliya had completed it half a century before.

Piyale Pasha Mosque

Süleyman the Magnificent's Croatian-born grand admiral, whose conquests included the Tunisian island of Jerba and the Aegean island of Chios, built his grand mosque complex inland from the imperial dockyards of the Golden Horn. Evliya relates that he cut a canal to connect it to the water, thus opening up the area to settlement. The canal was lined with houses in gardens and vineyards, but after the pasha's death in 1578, it "filled up with earth and the garbage brought by flooding rains" and fell out of use. Evliya heard that the window grilles of the mosque were made of the lead of church bells taken as booty during Piyale's campaigns.

Set on a raised platform in a garden where children play and hens roam freely, this unusual mosque is a must-see. Its six-domed prayer hall harks back to an architectural form of earlier Ottoman times. ◆

Caroline Finkel is the author of 'Osman's Dream: The Story of the Ottoman Empire 1300–1923' (John Murray) and co-author of 'The Evliya Çelebi Way' (Upcountry), a guide to Evliya's route in 1671

'An Ottoman Traveller: Selections from the "Book of Travels" of Evliya Çelebi', edited and translated by Robert Dankoff and Sooyong Kim (Eland). All available from cornucopia.net

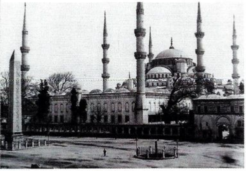
Sultanahmet and the Hippodrome

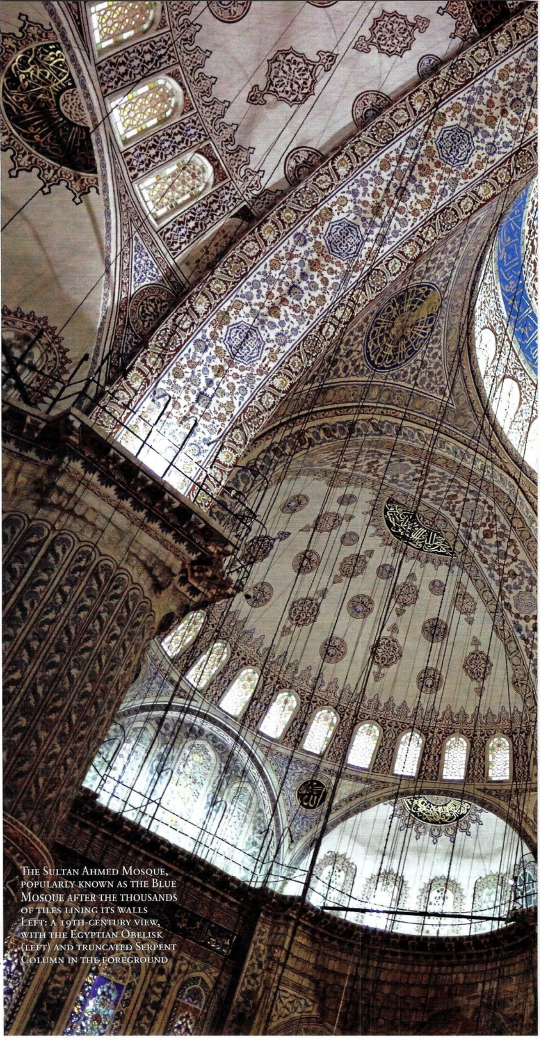
WONDER UPON WONDER

The great monuments of the Old City smite the eye. Explore them, then look beyond to discover more exquisite treasures and even sweeter pleasures

The Ottoman Sultan Ahmed I (1603–17) gave his name not only to the Blue Mosque (Sultan Ahmet Camii), the big-ticket item for anyone visiting Istanbul, but to the entire district round the ancient Hippodrome (Atmeydanı). Minutes from the early-17th-century mosque are the great sixth-century basilica of Ayasofya, the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts, the Byzantine Basilica Cistern and the Topkapı. It is a neighbourhood of domes and minarets and competing calls to prayer, but also a place of boutique hotels, teashops and outdoor restaurants catering to tourist needs. Not to mention a magnet for rip-off taxi drivers and deeply obnoxious hawkers trying to sell you postcards and/or a rug.

Until recently it was not just tourists who flooded into





The Sultan Ahmed Mosque, popularly known as the Blue Mosque after the thousands of tiles lining its walls
Left: a 19th-century view, with the Egyptian Obelisk (left) and truncated Serpent Column in the foreground

JÜRGEN FRANK

Sultanahmet. The law courts were nearby, and in not-too-distant memory going to Sultanahmet meant spending time in the local prison – now converted into the very superior Four Seasons Hotel.

A wander down the hill towards the Sea of Marmara takes you into a different world. Literally on the other side of the railway tracks is an old Roma neighbourhood of wooden houses and narrow streets.

Sultanahmet is also the place to hunt for hidden treasures – the little-known monuments that the tourist buses pass by. Just as interesting as the 3,500-year-old Egyptian obelisk in the centre of the Hippodrome is the bas-relief pictorial account of the great effort it took for the Byzantine emperor to get it up the hill – a feat of late-fourth-century engineering.

A short walk down to Gülhane Park leads past a Rococo-style gateway – the not-quite-sublime portal, which gave its name to the Ottoman government. It is also worth looking out for the Milion, the milestone erected by Constantine the Great in AD324, proclaiming the city he had founded to be the centre of the world.

Below the Topkapı

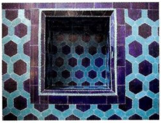
The Archaeological Museums

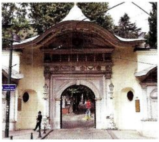
Three museums, collectively known as the Archaeological Museums, overlook what were once playing fields for javelin-throwing *jereed* tournaments. This terraced hillside below the Topkapı was part of the palace's hanging gardens overlooking the Golden Horn. The three museums are the principal Archaeological Museum, the Museum of the Ancient East and the Çinili Köşk (Tiled Pavilion).

Once you've admired the breathtaking Alexander Sarcophagus and its related marble tombs from Sidon in the **Archaeological Museum**, the statues of Apollo and Artemis with their enigmatic Archaic smiles, and the frighteningly real portraits of bull-necked Roman consuls, take a look at the museum's Byzantine collection and the excellent display "Istanbul Through the Ages" (see page 144).

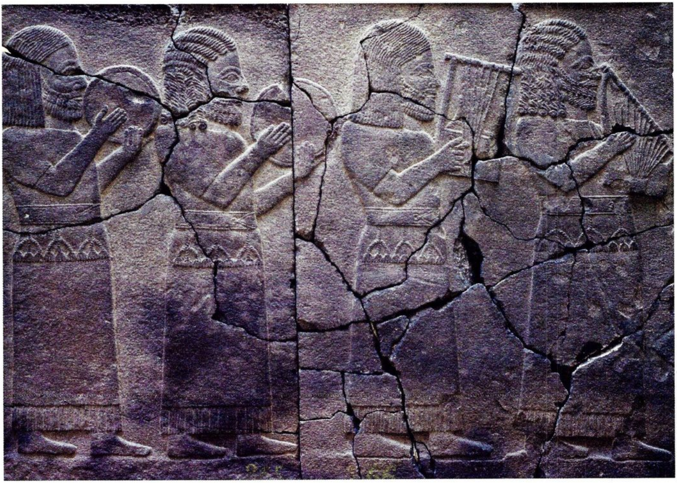
Astonishing new additions are the remains of 37 ships wrecked in Yenikapı harbour in the Old City and excavated in the past decade during the construction of the new metro under the Bosphorus – a dig that also revealed footprints in the mud 11,000 years old, predating the Bosphorus.

The **Museum of the Ancient East** opened in 1917, mainly for finds dug up in Mesopotamia





Top Tiles in the Çinili Köşk
Above The Sublime Porte
Below Hittite musicians at the Archaeological Museum
Right and far right The Egyptian Obelisk and the Hippodrome it once graced



FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG AND JÜRGEN FRANK and Egypt when they were still part of the Ottoman Empire. They include some 75,000 cuneiform tablets. There are also Hittite finds from Anatolia, such as these remarkable eighth-century-BC musicians (opposite).

There is no better proof of Mehmed the Conqueror's breadth of vision than the three large architectural follies in three different styles that he built on this terrace. The "Italian" and "Byzantine" pavilions were both in ruins in 1891 when Osman Hamdi built his Archaeological Museum on top of them. Only the Çinili Köşk with its striking hexagonal tiles (left) survives.

Mehmed built it soon after conquering the principality of Karaman in central Anatolia in 1468. He razed the capital and brought back the Karamanid craftsmen who built him his folly. These men carried with them their Turcoman ways – hence the pavilion's shape and tiles, which are uniquely Central Asian.

Those interested in Central Asia should make their way down the hill to the little **Otağ Music Centre** near the Gülhane tram stop (Alayköşkü Cad 20), whose owners will happily tell you of ancient musical remedies. Around the corner in their museum is a bewildering array of traditional Central Asian instruments, such as the *dutar*, *dombra* and *ney*. Turkish musicians regularly drop in for jam sessions.

GÜLHANE PARK

Historically, this park formed the outer gardens of the Topkapı Palace. Now it is the place to relax after exploring the palace and museums. It has one of the lushest tulip displays in April, but the bright green, newly laid turf jars in the muted shade of the plane trees. If you arrive by tram, you'll find a new café beside the Gülhane tram stop, from where you walk through the garden on your way to the cobbled lane leading up to the Archaeological Museums and Topkapı. A lovely tea garden at the far end of the park, close to the Sarayburnu (Seraglio Point) entrance (the easiest if you arrive by taxi), has views across the Bosphorus, and serves tea in brass samovars.

Around the Hippodrome

ATMEYDANI

The name Atmeydanı (Horse Square) gives the game away. It was Constantine the Great's Hippodrome, the largest of three in the city, scene of the great chariot races between the Greens and the Blues in horse-drawn baskets. The central barrier, the *spina*, was a series of raised pools, now buried beneath the cobbles, on which stood a row of trophy monuments. In the middle is the coiled **Serpent Column of Delphi.** Its last remaining head is in the Archaeological Museum (page 144).

The granite **Egyptian Obelisk** is a tribute to the pharaoh Thutmosis III. In AD390, a full century after it had been brought to the harbour of Constaninople, the architects of the Byzantine emperor Theodosius the Great finally devised a strategy for hauling the granite shaft up the hill and onto its mount. Unfortunately, it broke. What should have towered 40 metres high ended up a mere 20 and had to be mounted on a high plinth. The truncated Egyptian Obelisk would now be overshadowed by Constantine the Great's masonry obelisk, built as a stopgap before the real thing arrived and still standing; 32 metres tall, it was originally covered in gleaming bronze, looted in the Fourth Crusade.

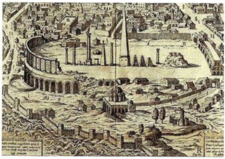
Most organised tours start in the Hippodrome before the museums open. It's more pleasant in the evening, when the coaches have gone and the locals are relaxing. The base of the Egyptian Obelisk tells the whole story. Crowds gather at ceremonies, with the emperor presiding from his box. Dancing girls and musicians entertain, charioteers race, barbarians offer tribute.

SULTAN AHMED MOSQUE (The Blue Mosque)

Art historians tend to sniff at the Blue Mosque, built between 1609 and 1616 by the last of the great Sinan's pupils, Sedefkâr Mehmed Ağa (who also made Ahmed I's mother-of-pearl throne). The heavy fluted piers and the 21,043 tiles that gave the mosque its name, in every shade of blue from sky to lapis lazuli, illustrate the Ottoman classical age when it was past its best. Purists make for the Süleymaniye (page 86).

Even in its day the mosque courted controversy. Viziers' palaces were destroyed to build it. Then Ahmed dared to give it six minarets, when the Grand Mosque in Mecca was alone in the world in having that number. It also broke an unspoken rule: great mosques were triumphs – only conquerors could build in Istanbul. Ahmed was no warrior. To add modern insult to ancient injury, an outsize replica of the Blue Mosque is now planned for the city's highest hilltop, Çamlıca, across the Bosphorus.

The mosque does have undeniable grace, with a stack of domes and fine stone trimmings, even if the 18 muezzins that sang the call to prayer from its 18 balconies have been replaced by the booming voice of Ezan FM. The mosque is best appreciated from a distance, preferably the terrace of the palace of Ibrahim Pasha, whose sea view it blocked.



THE MUSEUM OF TURKISH AND ISLAMIC ARTS

Across the Hippodrome from the Blue Mosque, this museum (also known as the **İbrahim Paşa Sarayı**) was the residence of Süleyman the Magnificent's first great grand vizier, Ibrahim Pasha, who collected Renaissance statues and Flemish tapestries. Its palatial pretension was probably a reason why Süleyman had him executed in 1536. Miniatures depict the sultan watching the procession of the guilds from its balcony. The Seljuk and Ottoman carpets in the museum – some vast, some dating from the 13th century – were the property of foundations all over the empire, brought to Istanbul for safekeeping when the Ottoman world collapsed a century ago.

AYASOFYA

This building alone, for a thousand years the largest on earth, justifies a visit to Istanbul. The church of Haghia Sophia, or Holy Wisdom, later the mosque of Ayasofya and since 1935 a museum, is daunting in size. Climb to the gallery to see at close quarters one of the greatest Byzantine works of art, the awesome 13th-century mosaic of the Deesis, the Intercession of the Virgin and John the Baptist. Also there are the imperial portraits of John II Comnenus and Eirene, dating from 1118. The exterior is best seen at sunset from a nearby rooftop: several hotels happily oblige for the price of a glass of rakı or beer. Ayasofya is closed on Mondays. (See *Terrifying Beauty,* page 148)

THE GREAT PALACE OF CONSTANTINE

In the outer courtyard of the Blue Mosque, look out for a massive marble sofa unearthed during illegal excavations in 1998. This is one of the few glimpses of the treasures below. The Hippodrome is bordered to the south by Istanbul's great "missing" monument, Constantine's Great Palace, which was not so much one grand building as a sprawling complex of pavilions that covered the slope down to the Sea of Marmara.

The palace was all but destroyed by the Fourth Crusade of 1204, and was never rebuilt. What the crusaders could not haul back to Venice disappeared over the years as *spolia*, or building material for other monuments. In the Arasta Bazaar, behind the Blue Mosque, the shops part to reveal the modest **Mosaic Museum,** lined with floor mosaics, bucolic and formal, from the Great Palace, excavated in the 1950s.

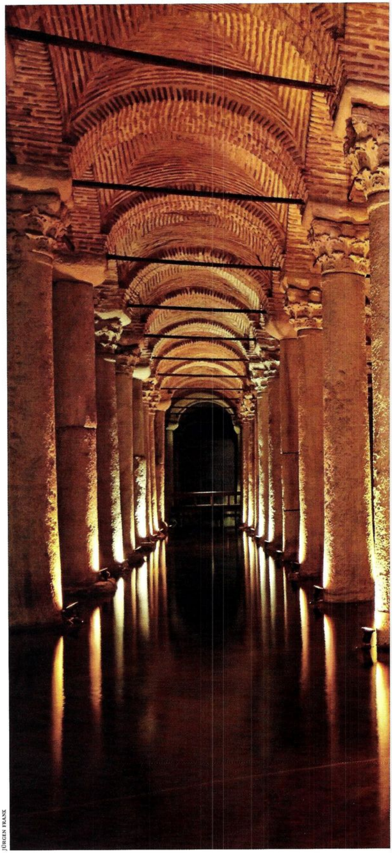
YEREBATAN SARAYI (Basilica Cistern)

Across the tramline from Ayasofya, the most visible of engineering masterpieces, is the most invisible. On a sweltering day in the historic peninsula, there is no better place to be than the sixth-century Basilica Cistern. One hot summer's day several years ago *(writes Robert Ousterhout)*, I took refuge in the cistern, only to be followed by the Janissary Band, still playing. I was reminded of all the purposes cisterns were not designed to serve: concert hall, coffee house, shopping emporium... Nor was the cistern designed to be an aesthetic experience, although today, with coloured lights and mood music, visitors are enchanted.

It was substructure, designed to hold water, and lots of it, to satisfy a thirsty population. So the rows of columns (336 in total) are mismatched factory seconds, stacked two high, intended to support the modular vaults, on which the law courts once rested. And despite what Dan Brown and his legion of fans might think, the Medusa heads in the far corner were not inverted to negate their deadly gaze, but were simply the right size to support the columns.

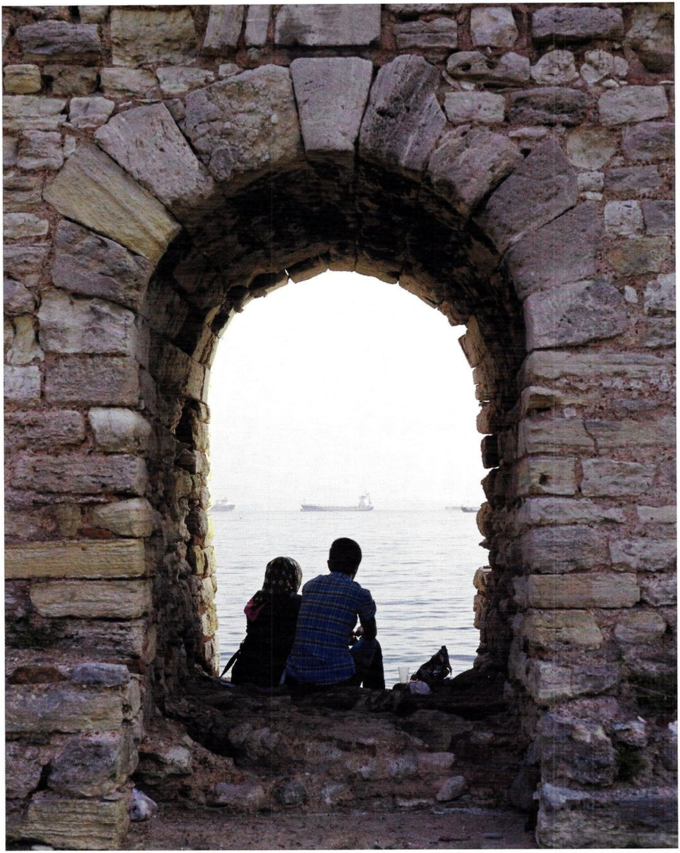
THE VAKIFLAR CARPET MUSEUM

In 2006, a temporary exhibition at the International Conference on Oriental Carpets gave visitors a glimpse of what the Vakıflar Carpet Museum might look like *(writes Ben Evans of Halı Magazine)*. After seven years the museum has opened, in the *imaret* (soup kitchen) of Ayasofya, and the wait has been well worth it. This is one of the world's most important carpet collections, gathered from



JÜRGEN FRANK

THE SIXTH-CENTURY BASILICA CISTERN (YEREBATAN SARAYI), WITH ITS 336 COLUMNS, WAS NOT DESIGNED TO BE SEEN, BUT ITS COLOURED LIGHTS AND MUSIC MAKE IT AN ATTRACTION TODAY



JÜRGEN FRANK

HALI MAGAZINE

mosques all over the country. The 60 dramatically lit rugs include this 17th-century Western Anatolian rug with cintamani spots.

By the Sea of Marmara

A refreshingly ramshackle little quarter, below the *sphendrome* (the rounded end) of the Hippodrome, extends from Ahırkapı, under the Topkapı walls, to Kumkapı. These slopes catch the Marmara breezes and are pleasant for strolling. They also have two of the city's most important buildings from the golden ages of the Byzantine and Ottoman empires.

Sinan's finest small mosque, the **Sokollu Mehmed Pasha**, was built not for the strapping six-foot grand vizier whose name it carries, but for his wife, İsmihan, Süleyman the Magnificent's granddaughter. Nowhere did Sinan make more subtle use of Iznik tiles to highlight the architecture. He also exploited the mosque's position on the side of a hill to theatrical effect.

Down by the railway line, Justinian and Theodora's palace church, **Sts Sergius and Bacchus**, now **Küçük Ayasofya Camii** (see page 160), is an exuberant dress rehearsal for the great basilica.

Contributors: Andrew Finkel, Robert Ousterhout, Tim Cornwell, Victoria Khroundina

Opposite A view from the Byzantine sea walls
Above A 17th-century rug in the Vakiflar Carpet Museum
Above right The Sokollu Mehmed Pasha Mosque, 1571/72
Right The 1584 Çemberlitaş Hamam, another Sinan gem

JÜRGEN FRANK

TRAVEL

Dodge the hordes

Most visitors to Istanbul beat a path to the Topkapı and the glories of Sultanahmet. Avoiding the crowds is essential. Time of year and time of day are critical – late in the day is best. Istanbul in July is like Paris in August – surprisingly empty, as the city has a reputation for being unbearably hot and residents leave for the countryside and the coast. Hotels are likely to have vacancies, as it is not high season, and the streets are easier to get around. Everything fills up again in August. A plus in June and July are the jazz and classical music festivals.

Istanbul's autumn often has an extended Indian summer, the *pastırma yazı*. Very agreeable, but not entirely reliable. February is for diehards: breakfast in shirt sleeves, lunch in snow boots. It can snow for days on end, or not at all. After the last flake falls, expect two days of glorious sunshine.

You don't need to queue if you have a **museum card.** They cost TL85, are valid for 72 hours, starting with the first museum visit, and can only be used at each museum once. Visit muze.gov.tr/museum_pass.

Getting around

Trams The easiest way to and from Sultanahmet. Buy jetons at the main tram stops, or a smart card (*akbil*).
Buses Open-top, hop-on-hop-off bus tours start in front of Ayasofya.
Taxis Never take taxis from the Topkapı or Ayasofya, and insist on the meter (*saat*) being turned on. Hotels will arrange taxi tours.

Hotels

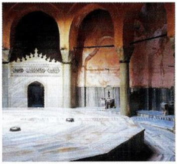
New small hotels open daily. For sublime isolation, take refuge in the **Four Seasons**, a luxurious former prison. Next door, the **Empress Zoe** has a charming courtyard garden, and is a lovely secret place to have a drink; they also provide a good breakfast. The rooms are small, but suites very comfortable. The **İbrahim Pasha Hotel**, next to the grand vizier's palace, is chic, the **Turkoman Hotel** simple and friendly. Good newcomers are the **Celine**, at the end of the Hippodrome, and the **Sarıkonak**, down by Küçük Ayasofya.

Turkish baths

No visit to Istanbul is complete without a visit to a hamam. There is no obligation to have a massage or scrub. The **Çemberlitaş Hamam** (+90 212 522 7974), next to the Burnt Column, just outside the Grand Bazaar, was built by Nurbânu, Murad III's mother, and opened in 1584. The men's baths, designed by Sinan, are perhaps the most perfect in the city. The women's baths were truncated when the road was widened.

Halfway between the Grand Bazaar and Ayasofya, the **Cağaloğlu Hamam** (+90 212 522 2424), built in 1741, is less busy and more geared to tourists. The women's baths are just as splendid as the men's.

The tram to Tophane, across the Golden Horn, takes you to the luxurious, beautifully restored and more spa-like **Kılıç Ali Pasha Hamam** (+90 212 393 8010).


FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG

Spending spree

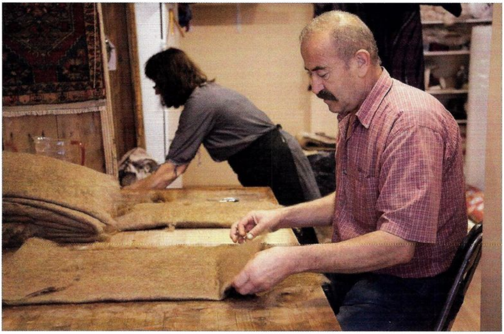
FOR THE BUYER WITH LOVE

EXPLORE SULTANAHMET'S ARASTA BAZAAR, TURN THE CLOCK BACK TO 1800S' BEYAZIT SQUARE, THEN DIVE INTO THE GRAND BAZAAR

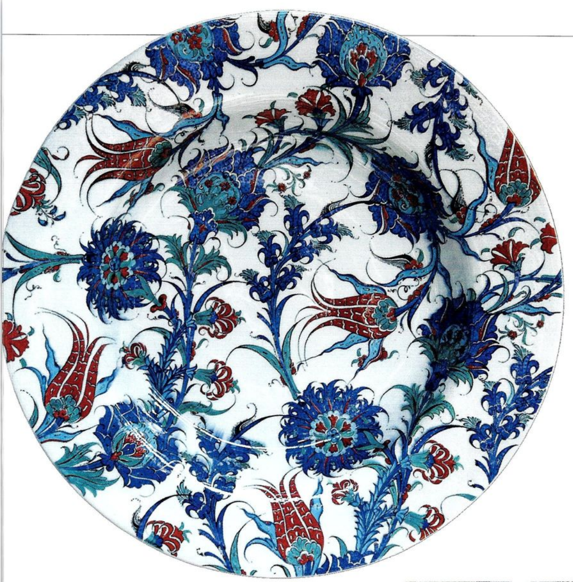
Part of the original Blue Mosque complex, the **Arasta Bazaar** is a street of small shops tucked away behind the mosque, pleasing in its pretty design and peaceful atmosphere. Gutted by fire, the shops were rebuilt after mosaics from the Byzantine Great Palace were excavated in the 1920s: essential viewing in the small **Mosaic Museum** halfway down the street.

The shops are among the Old City's classiest: serious traders offer ceramics and textiles to rival anything in Istanbul, and shopkeepers are banned from badgering potential customers.

FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG



Top left A row of colourful fantasy houses, part of an Eastern Turkestan café near the Hippodrome
Left Mehmet Girgiç making bespoke sikke hats in his Sultanahmet workshop
Above Covetable towels at the textile shop Jennifer's Hamam in the Arasta Bazaar
Top right A brilliant modern Iznik plate by Adnan Hoca at Iznik Classics
Right A kaftan of many colours – a 19th-century silk Uzbek Ikat chapan – at Mehmet Çetinkaya
Far right A place for relaxation in Beyazit Square, next to the Grand Bazaar's Bookseller's Bazaar, where Yayha Kemal's vignette (overleaf) is set



SEA OF COLOURS

Setting out at the Ayasofya end of the Arasta Bazaar, do not miss the tiny textile shop **Jennifer's Hamam**. Since its doors opened in 2009 at No 135, the Canadian Jennifer Gaudet has revitalised family weaving with her traditionally woven items in organic cotton, linen and sometimes silk. Look out for one-of-a-kind towels, thin hamam *peştemal* that double up as scarves or wraps, impossibly luxurious bathrobes.

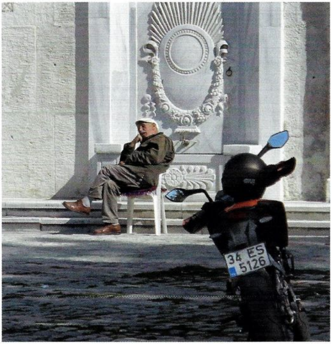
Mehmet Çetinkaya, at Tavukhane Sok 7, just outside the Arasta, at the opposite end to Ayasofya, started as a tiny shop and morphed into two galleries, one focusing on textiles, the other on covetable works by Turkish artisans. Stunned by the "sea of colours" he found in the former Russian republics in 1992, Çetinkaya started collecting the silk ikats of Central Asia. Brilliantly lit textiles are hung as works of art.

The artisan Mehmet Girgiç is at **İkonium**, in a leafy square off Klodfarer Caddesi, yards from the Sultanahmet tram stop. He grew up in Konya watching felt-makers moulding their wool in the local hamam. Now he and his American partner, Theresa May-O'Brien, work together on a wide range of felt creations – from way-out felt amphoras to traditional bespoke double-walled *sikke* hats, which are sought after by a surprising number of discerning dervishes around the world. Even Prince Charles has one.

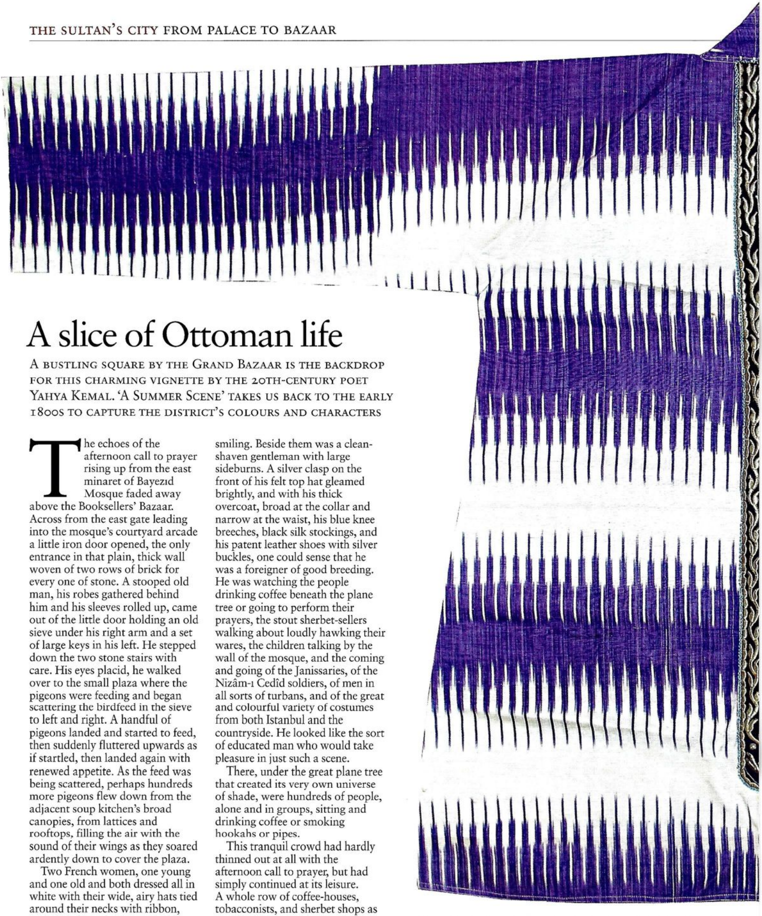
THE IZNIK REVIVAL

Be warned: Sinan's wonderful use of Iznik tiles in the Rüstem Pasha and Sokollu Mehmed Pasha Mosques makes the urge to buy your own irresistible. But Iznik has always been expensive, partly because of its high quartz content. In the 18th century even the sultan turned to cheaper imports from Delft for the Topkapı.

Today there is a revival. It is illegal to export historic Iznik ceramics, but new designs and exquisite replicas, while still costly – anywhere between TL150 and TL85,000 – are worth collecting. **Iznik Classics**, outside the Arasta, close to the Four Seasons, offers a good introduction with work from several studios. The ceramicist Günhan Adnan Hoca works in the classic Iznik style, with elegant drawing, intense colour and a deep shine to his glaze. This dish sells for TL15,000.



BERRIN TOROLSAN



A slice of Ottoman life

A BUSTLING SQUARE BY THE GRAND BAZAAR IS THE BACKDROP FOR THIS CHARMING VIGNETTE BY THE 20TH-CENTURY POET YAHYA KEMAL. 'A SUMMER SCENE' TAKES US BACK TO THE EARLY 1800S TO CAPTURE THE DISTRICT'S COLOURS AND CHARACTERS

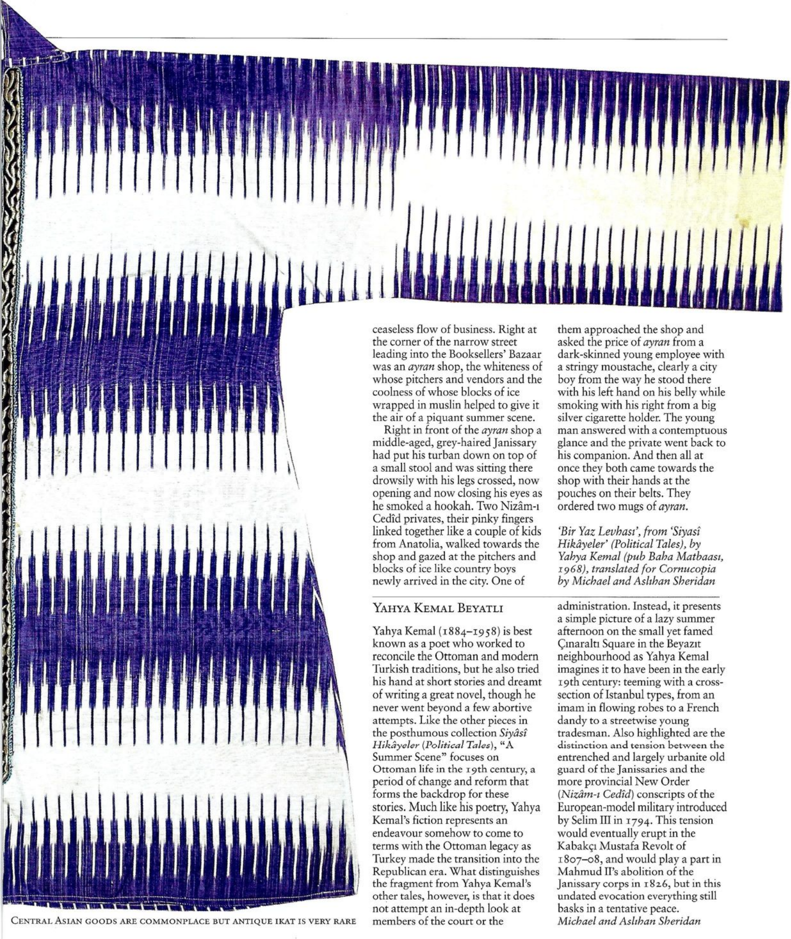
The echoes of the afternoon call to prayer rising up from the east minaret of Bayezıd Mosque faded away above the Booksellers' Bazaar. Across from the east gate leading into the mosque's courtyard arcade a little iron door opened, the only entrance in that plain, thick wall woven of two rows of brick for every one of stone. A stooped old man, his robes gathered behind him and his sleeves rolled up, came out of the little door holding an old sieve under his right arm and a set of large keys in his left. He stepped down the two stone stairs with care. His eyes placid, he walked over to the small plaza where the pigeons were feeding and began scattering the birdfeed in the sieve to left and right. A handful of pigeons landed and started to feed, then suddenly fluttered upwards as if startled, then landed again with renewed appetite. As the feed was being scattered, perhaps hundreds more pigeons flew down from the adjacent soup kitchen's broad canopies, from lattices and rooftops, filling the air with the sound of their wings as they soared ardently down to cover the plaza.

Two French women, one young and one old and both dressed all in white with their wide, airy hats tied around their necks with ribbon, were watching the pigeons and smiling. Beside them was a clean-shaven gentleman with large sideburns. A silver clasp on the front of his felt top hat gleamed brightly, and with his thick overcoat, broad at the collar and narrow at the waist, his blue knee breeches, black silk stockings, and his patent leather shoes with silver buckles, one could sense that he was a foreigner of good breeding. He was watching the people drinking coffee beneath the plane tree or going to perform their prayers, the stout sherbet-sellers walking about loudly hawking their wares, the children talking by the wall of the mosque, and the coming and going of the Janissaries, of the Nizâm-ı Cedîd soldiers, of men in all sorts of turbans, and of the great and colourful variety of costumes from both Istanbul and the countryside. He looked like the sort of educated man who would take pleasure in just such a scene.

There, under the great plane tree that created its very own universe of shade, were hundreds of people, alone and in groups, sitting and drinking coffee or smoking hookahs or pipes.

This tranquil crowd had hardly thinned out at all with the afternoon call to prayer, but had simply continued at its leisure. A whole row of coffee-houses, tobacconists, and sherbet shops as small as cabinets teemed with a

AN IKAT CHAPAN FROM UZBEKISTAN (MEHMET ÇETINKAYA COLLECTION).



Central Asian goods are commonplace but antique ikat is very rare

ceaseless flow of business. Right at the corner of the narrow street leading into the Booksellers' Bazaar was an *ayran* shop, the whiteness of whose pitchers and vendors and the coolness of whose blocks of ice wrapped in muslin helped to give it the air of a piquant summer scene.

Right in front of the *ayran* shop a middle-aged, grey-haired Janissary had put his turban down on top of a small stool and was sitting there drowsily with his legs crossed, now opening and now closing his eyes as he smoked a hookah. Two Nizâm-ı Cedîd privates, their pinky fingers linked together like a couple of kids from Anatolia, walked towards the shop and gazed at the pitchers and blocks of ice like country boys newly arrived in the city. One of them approached the shop and asked the price of *ayran* from a dark-skinned young employee with a stringy moustache, clearly a city boy from the way he stood there with his left hand on his belly while smoking with his right from a big silver cigarette holder. The young man answered with a contemptuous glance and the private went back to his companion. And then all at once they both came towards the shop with their hands at the pouches on their belts. They ordered two mugs of *ayran*.

'Bir Yaz Levhası', from 'Siyasî Hikâyeler' (Political Tales), by Yahya Kemal (pub Baha Matbaası, 1968), translated for Cornucopia by Michael and Aslıhan Sheridan

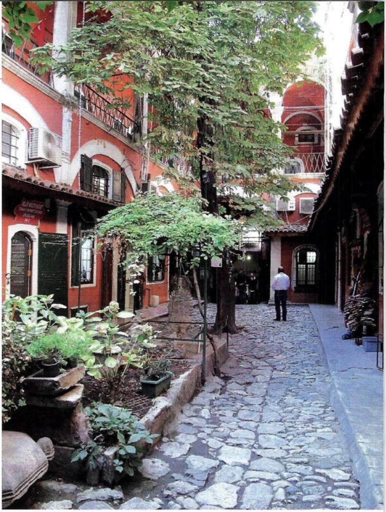
YAHYA KEMAL BEYATLI

Yahya Kemal (1884–1958) is best known as a poet who worked to reconcile the Ottoman and modern Turkish traditions, but he also tried his hand at short stories and dreamt of writing a great novel, though he never went beyond a few abortive attempts. Like the other pieces in the posthumous collection *Siyâsî Hikâyeler* (*Political Tales*), "A Summer Scene" focuses on Ottoman life in the 19th century, a period of change and reform that forms the backdrop for these stories. Much like his poetry, Yahya Kemal's fiction represents an endeavour somehow to come to terms with the Ottoman legacy as Turkey made the transition into the Republican era. What distinguishes the fragment from Yahya Kemal's other tales, however, is that it does not attempt an in-depth look at members of the court or the administration. Instead, it presents a simple picture of a lazy summer afternoon on the small yet famed Çınaraltı Square in the Beyazıt neighbourhood as Yahya Kemal imagines it to have been in the early 19th century: teeming with a cross-section of Istanbul types, from an imam in flowing robes to a French dandy to a streetwise young tradesman. Also highlighted are the distinction and tension between the entrenched and largely urbanite old guard of the Janissaries and the more provincial New Order (*Nizâm-ı Cedîd*) conscripts of the European-model military introduced by Selim III in 1794. This tension would eventually erupt in the Kabakçı Mustafa Revolt of 1807–08, and would play a part in Mahmud II's abolition of the Janissary corps in 1826, but in this undated evocation everything still basks in a tentative peace.
Michael and Aslıhan Sheridan

The Grand Bazaar

EVERYTHING THE HEART DESIRES

FROM IZNIK TO ARMANI, OBJETS D'ART TO HANDLOOMED CARPETS: THE CHOICE IS YOURS



Istanbul's Grand Bazaar is a covered box (*"kapalıçarşı kapalı kutu"*), the poet Orhan Veli said. Lift the lid and all manner of goodies come tumbling out: colourful, joyful, decorative. As you enter, no matter who you are, a childlike mood comes over you. Everyone can find some reward among the endless jewels, bolts of cloth, silken scarves, pashmina throws, merchandise from every corner of the world.

It helps, though, to have an eye, to sort the elegant from the trash and kitsch, the belly dancers' costumes, football shirts and Lacoste knockoffs. Here is a rainbow of Iznik tiles, collectable and decorative; there, glittering lanterns. Stacked alongside the latest offerings from Gucci, Armani and Chanel are handmade leather Yemeni slippers. Leather is everywhere – in smart shoes, jackets, handbags, briefcases, belts – and the quality seems to grow ever better, but it takes confidence to spot the wearable. Interesting leather shops crowd in on the old Havuzlu Lokantası, the Restaurant with the Pool. There are inlaid backgammon boards, onyx chess sets, strings of pearls, meerschaum – some items traditional, others new.

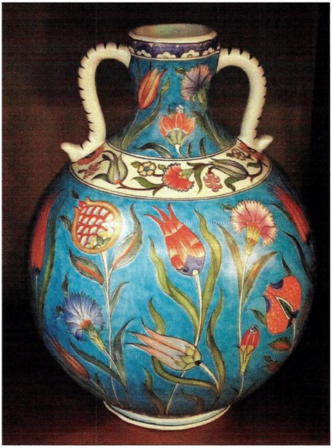
At either end of the Grand Bazaar (also known as the Covered Bazaar), fortress-like gates lead into the main street, a barrel-vaulted treasure trove glittering with goldsmiths' shops, that extends all the way from the **Beyazıt Gate** in the west, next to the shady book bazaar, to the **Nuruosmaniye Gate** in the east, with its colossal Baroque mosque. Off to the north, streets branch down the hill towards Eminönü, in a labyrinth of specialist quarters, of carpets, silver, fabrics...

Clusters of han courtyards extend well beyond the bazaar confines, full of curious architectural detail and wonderful to explore. Together they become a maze, built up layer upon layer over the centuries as shops, workshops and entire trades were added. In a city where so much is changing, it is a relief to find old friends still prospering in this enduring place.

MAGIC CARPETS

The pretty **Zincirlihan** courtyard is home to **Şişko Osman's** wonderful store of Anatolian rugs. Good pieces from Turkey are increasingly scarce, but the stock built up by the tireless Osman over years, endlessly driving from one end of the country to the other, assures a continuing supply of kilims and carpets. Next door is the office of **Lümes**, Istanbul's famous crystal chandelier manufacturers.

If you fancy something more modern, you can find abstract carpets for a fixed price of around €500 a square metre at Mehmet Güreli's **Dhoku** (Takkeciler Sok 58–60). Designs are commissioned from leading artists and handloomed in Uşak and Izmir on the Aegean. Güreli's original firm is across the street: **Ethnicon** produces



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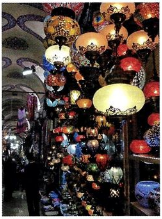


GRAND BAZAAR FINDS
Opposite, top The timeless Zincirlihan, home of the carpet dealer Şişko Osman Opposite, below A modern Iznik amphora by Ismail Yiğit at Iznik Art, and an Anatolian Sivas Şal carpet at Loom Art

This page, above Silk with all the trimmings at Istanbuloya Left A street of Oriental lanterns Above right Strings of semi-precious stones at Horasan Right Patchwork kilim rug from Dhoku Below A kaftan at Armaggan

an unending variety of one-off patchwork rugs, much in demand at London's Conran Shop.

One of the best exponents of the other great Turkish tradition, glazed ceramics, is round the corner, at Ercan Çopur's **Iznik Art** (Kazazlar Sok 64), which offers wares by the Kütahya ceramicist Ismail Yiğit. The current collection steers away from varnished glaze, creating a subtle, muted effect. Vases like the one opposite cost from €3000.

BAUBLES AND BANGLES

At **Chalabi**, close to the Nuruosmaniye Gate (Sandal Bedestan 6), Paul Chalabi, a fourth-generation antiques dealer, carries on a family business, begun in Ottoman Beirut, sourcing fine antique jewellery, silverware and objets d'art. The firm is also a partner of the auctioneers Alif Art, with a gallery in Mim Kemal Öke Caddesi in Maçka.

In the **Old Bedestan**, at the heart of the bazaar, **Murat Bilir** deals in antique copper. In another corner of this inner sanctum is the meerschaum man – Turkey is the only country to have the mines – next to a literally unmissable corner shop laden with everything brass.

In the street known as the Köylü Pazar, the Villagers' Bazaar, the **Şark Kahvesi** (the Orient Coffee House) has become almost too respectable but is a welcome island in the sea of exotica. Just past it, **Doctor's No 1** still has hand-woven sheets from Denizli, the only thing to sleep on in the heat of summer.

ART AND SMART

Nuruosmaniye Caddesi, the street that leads to the bazaar from Ayasofya, is full of carpet emporia, which get bigger and burlier the more monstrous cruise-liners grow. Just outside the gate, Kâşif Gündoğdu's **Sofa** is a delightful refuge, a veritable museum of paintings new and old, objets d'art, copper plates, textiles, small jewellery, good books, good conversation. It has a firmly Bohemian air, does its best to promote artists and also sells interesting CDs.

A few doors down, at No 65, the super-aloof **Armaggan** soars to many floors of exquisite designer goods. The silk kaftans are exceptional: the blue one below left costs TL2500. The gallery stages themed exhibitions of work by young artists from all over the country. Quite the smartest place in the area. The top-floor restaurant is one of the few here to open in the evening.

LAPIS LAZULI AND LACE

The Grand Bazaar is constantly attracting new blood, often fugitives from trouble spots. Turkic Afghans brought with them the wealth of Central Asia – piles of precious and semi-precious stones, silk ikats, exquisitely embroidered suzanis, and lovely headgear from the steppes. The firm **Horasan** has blossomed into four shops – Yorgancılar Caddesi 22 has a good range of semi-precious stones, carved jade and lapis lazuli. No 37 has smoothly polished turquoise pieces as big as a duck's egg.

Now the Syrians are evident alongside the Afghans. **Mawlana** (Terlekçiler Sok 12) offers gorgeous necklaces of semi-precious stones, gold and silver from Aleppo for as little TL250. Opposite, at No 27, Nuray Beyhan's **Istanbuloya** has handmade, lacy trimmings (*oya*), used in attractive accessories.

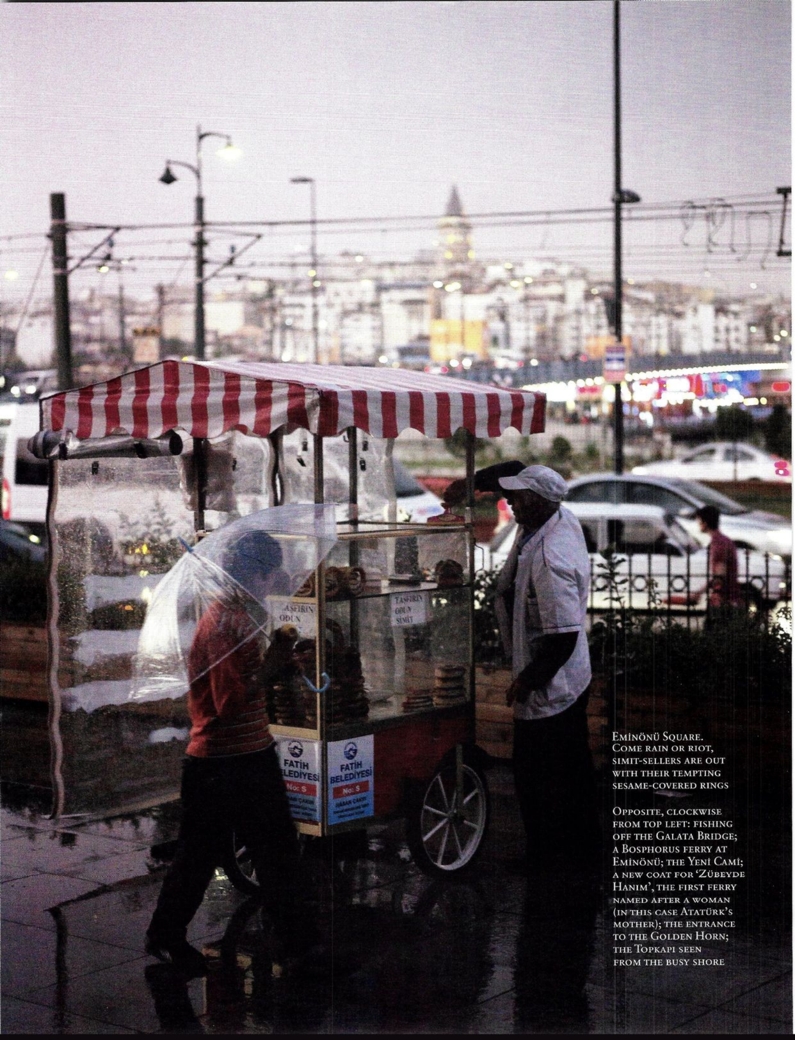
For listings of shops, artisans and restaurants in Istanbul, visit cornucopia.net/guide

The Port, Markets and Mosques

FULL STEAM AHEAD

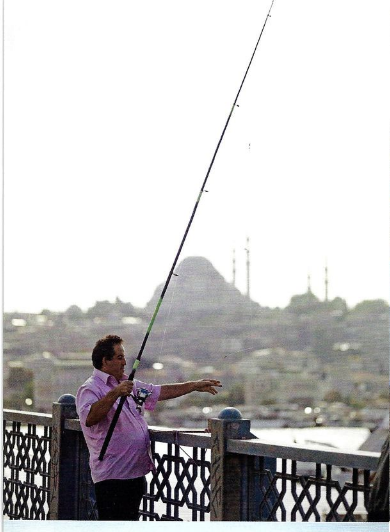
Brace yourself for an assault on the senses. One of the world's most exhilarating urban landscapes greets you as you approach the gritty historic district of Eminönü at the entrance to the Golden Horn. Hills are crowned with mosques that cascade down to teeming bazaars on the shore below. This grandiose prospect belies the intimacy within, where city and village mingle. Photographs by Jürgen Frank

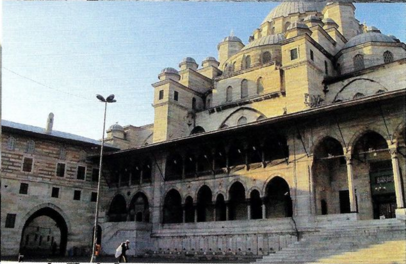
Sinan's 16th-century Süleymaniye Mosque, on the far right, rises above the bazaars at the entrance to the Golden Horn. In the centre is the Yeni Cami, which was once behind the old Byzantine sea walls

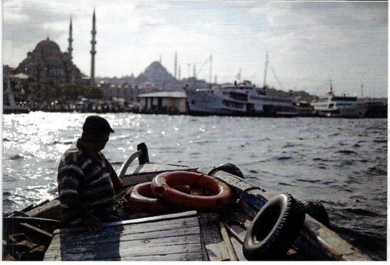


Eminönü Square. Come rain or riot, simit-sellers are out with their tempting sesame-covered rings

Opposite, clockwise from top left: fishing off the Galata Bridge; a Bosphorus ferry at Eminönü; the Yeni Cami; a new coat for 'Zübeyde Hanim', the first ferry named after a woman (in this case Atatürk's mother); the entrance to the Golden Horn; the Topkapi seen from the busy shore




PROF.DR. AYKUT BARKA



Eminönü and the Süleymaniye

THE LIFE AND SOUL

IF YOU HAVE ONLY ONE DAY TO SPEND IN ISTANBUL, THIS IS WHERE TO COME TO WALK, BREATHE AND IMBIBE THE CITY'S GLORIES, GLAMOUR AND GRIT

Eminönü is the teeming area surrounding the Yeni Cami, the theatrical 1660s New Mosque that looks out over the Galata Bridge to the European city. Built by a sultan's mother and admired by Wren and Vanbrugh, the mosque was the gateway to Old Stamboul and the Ottoman window on the world.

All that most visitors know of the district is the Spice Bazaar and the ferry stations. Everyone goes there before rushing off by tram or coach to the Topkapı. Not a bad thing in itself.

Dedicated shoppers get so absorbed that before they know it they have been drawn through swirling crowds to that other, far larger covered market at the top of the hill, the Grand Bazaar. Serious sightseers find their way to the exquisite Rüstem Pasha Mosque, then climb to the Süleymaniye, Sinan's grandest mosque and a lofty symbol of the Ottoman golden age.

In the dense triangle formed by Eminönü, the Süleymaniye and the Topkapı beats Istanbul's historic commercial heart. Every district is distinct in mood and flavour, architecture and artefact.

Classical Ottoman, Vienna Secession and Sixties Woolworth's jostle with Anatolian bazaar, rue de Rivoli and Othello's Venice.

Only when you know each bit by name, sound and smell can you grasp the story of this city and its people – but despair not. You can taste it all in one lengthy afternoon stroll. You will contend with uneven cobbles, jostling crowds and van drivers trying to squeeze through narrow alleys, but this is the unreconstructed working city, much more fun than touristy Sultanahmet, which is why the authorities have their eye on it, wanting to sanitise it, order it and maybe redevelop it.

JÜRGEN FRANK

FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG

Escape the hubbub

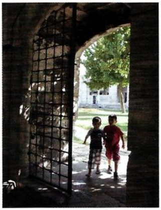
Whether you come by boat or tram, you alight on Eminönü's quay into a vortex of commotion. Everything is exaggerated, from the over-lit beer saloons under the **Galata Bridge** and the forest of fishing rods lining it, to the constant ebb and flood tides of humanity, swept by smoke from grilling mackerel or old ferries (now sadly fewer in number).

However, our "stroll" need not be all maelstrom and challenge. There are plenty of places to linger, so don't go rushing to tick off the sights. Some find a peaceful corner in the gloomy domed interior of the **Yeni Cami**, with its beautiful late Iznik tiles. Behind the mosque, in the gatehouse to the Spice Bazaar, **Pandeli** is a grand old institution that is not to be missed – for its atmosphere, its courtesy, the view through its grilles into the bazaar, and the magical deep-turquoise tiles on the staircase.

For a vista of mosques and bazaars, book a rooftop table at the kebab joint **Hamdi**. Also an institution in its way, it is one of the few places in the district open in the evening. The pistachio kebabs are particularly good.

An appealing place for ice-cold beer is humble **Çapa**, a café in villagey Küçükpazar, beyond the Rüstem Pasha Mosque. Or in the lovely, diminutive **Kadın Efendi Hamamı** over the road, abandon all earthly toils and lie on your back gazing at the dome.

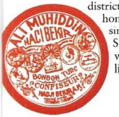
At the top of the hill, where the Süleymaniye overlooks the Golden Horn, you can rest in the mosque's precincts. The **Dârüzziyafe** is a faintly official restaurant in the shady courtyard of the old soup kitchen. Opposite the sultan's tomb, the stewed-bean shop **Kanaat** offers a front-row seat from which to admire Sinan's domes. Or picnic in the mosque gardens.



FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG

Istanbul's old Square Mile

From the square beside the Yeni Cami, turn left through the great arch below the mosque's imperial pavilion (restored, much admired by Europa Nostra, now closed) into the districts of **Sultanhamam**, home to the rag trade since the days of the Silk Route, and wander towards little **Sirkeci Station**,



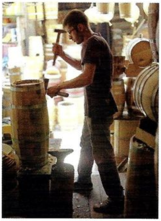
A CLIMB FROM EMINÖNÜ'S MARKETS TO THE DISTRICTS AROUND THE SÜLEYMANIYE OFFERS URBAN MAYHEM (TOP LEFT); A CLASSIC WELCOME AT VEFA BOZACISI, MAKERS OF VINEGAR AND A RESTORATIVE MILLET DRINK (FAR LEFT); AND BACKWATERS SUCH AS THE ALLEY LEADING TO THE ŞEHZADE MOSQUE (BOTH PICTURES, THIS PAGE).
LEFT: HACI BEKIR SUPPLY BONBONS TO KEEP YOU GOING

In the woodworking district of Tahtakale, Ömer Çetinkaya sells birchwood paddles for baking everything from pide to pizzas the terminus for the Orient Express, a delightful melange of Mughal clock towers and arches, medieval rose windows and Parisian-style saddle roof.

Sultanhamam was the economic engine of the early Republic. The grander offices sport Art Nouveau flourishes and Neoclassical domes, Orientalist trimmings and traces of old names such as Deutsche Orient Bank. These days fewer lawyers are purring "*şekerim*" (my sugar) into their telephones, but the neighbourhood still has purpose. Swiss watch distributors have offices here, the Chamber of Commerce does much to preserve the area's spirit, and the Commodities Exchange occupies the old Ottoman stock exchange.

There are architectural treats along the way. Noteworthy are the **Hamidiye Sebil**, one of the classic street-corner fountains, with fine grilles and broad eaves that are so much a feature of Ottoman street furniture, and the vast **Central Post Office**, with Ottoman pointed arches and Turkish tiles embellishing a soaring stone façade, more Berlin than Bosphorus.

BERRIN TOROLSAN



BELOW LEFT A CRAFTSMAN IN TAHTAKALE MAKES BARRELS FOR BUTTERMILK AND CIDER
RIGHT KALMAZ, ONE OF THE FEW REMAINING DRIED-HERB SHOPS IN THE SPICE BAZAAR
BELOW HASIRCILAR CADDESI, WITH ITS SWAGS OF DRIED VEGETABLES, HAS MANY NUT AND DRIED-FRUIT SHOPS
BOTTOM TURKISH COFFEE AT KURUKAHVECI MEHMET EFENDI. THE SCENT OF THE ROASTING COFFEE BEANS FLOATS ALL THE WAY UP THE HILL

PHOTOGRAPHS: JÜRGEN FRANK

Retail relief takes many forms. On Hamidiye Caddesi, along from the Hamidiye Fountain, there's *lokum* (Turkish delight) at **Hacı Bekir**, the oldest purveyors in the city; next door at **İmren**, Pepo's elegant feutres and cloth caps; rural ceramics and embroidered fabrics from **Dösim**, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism shop. The finest suit materials in the world used to be sold in this building. For men's suiting today, step up to the street above the post office. Those in the know buy their smalls from **Çift Kaplan** (Twin Tigers) behind the Spice Bazaar on Marpuççular Caddesi; assistants can gauge your size at a glance, so forget disputing an XL assessment.

Closer to Sirkeci Station, hunt for electronics at keen prices in **Doğubank Han**, a huge former office block. And there's a whole street of camera shops. Refuel with **Konyalı's** *talaş börek*, a delicious meaty pastry. If you are then gasping for sea air, head for the upper deck of a car ferry at Sirkeci for the round trip to Harem, on the Asian side (where harem ladies went for summer outings) – a surprisingly nice way to enjoy the scenery, take tea and the weight off your feet. You'll be back in 45 minutes, ready for more.

The Spice Bazaar

The centre of Eminönü is the Spice Bazaar (**Mısır Çarşısı**, literally Egyptian Bazaar). Spices are being ousted by tourist tat, but a trustworthy spice shop is **Ayfer** (No 7), which sells traditional saffron, *sahlep* (ground orchid root) and cinnamon. Another is the smaller, utterly unchanged **Kalmaz Baharat**, at No 41, where they busy themselves filling envelopes with nectar-like linden flower from Thrace as unseeing cruise-line passengers drift past. They also have *kekik suyu* (oregano water), essential for cuts and toothache. Keep an eye open, too, for good embroidered linen.

Avoid the trashy nut emporia in the bazaar, and follow your nose to the famous Turkish coffee purveyors **Kurukahveci Mehmet Efendi**, a 1932 gem of a shop, still family-run, at the corner of Tahmis Sokak and Hasırcılar Caddesi, where you will find all the best nut and dried-fruit shops. Tahmis Sokak, which runs down towards the sea parallel to the Spice Bazaar, has cheeses, offal, fish, the spicy sausage sucuk (try Coşkun) and seasonal goodies such as fresh walnuts and sweet, wrinkly, dried olives (*sele zeytin*), available a month or two after the December harvest. You are now at the entrance to Tahtakale.

Hardware heaven

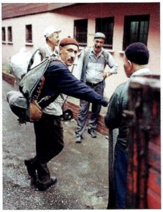
Hasırcılar Caddesi takes you into the heart of **Tahtakale** (Wooden Castle), a district synonymous with the black market in the days when currency was state-controlled. It is home to ancient suppliers of haberdashery, pressure cookers, stationery and everything you might want in, or from, the *yaylas* of Anatolia (shotguns, knives, rolling pins, cider barrels, stools, wasp traps…). The wooden baking paddles the **Çetinkaya** family have sold for 40 years come from the forests of Bolu, west of Istanbul. They can withstand temperatures of 360 degrees and run from short, rounded pizza paddles to the long, narrow models for *simit* (sesame rings).

Tahtakale conceals one of the city's greatest treasures, the **Rüstem Pasha Mosque**, which stands on a platform above the dizzying river of humanity, a paradise garden of Iznik tiles, a foretaste of Sinan's architectural triumphs on the hill above.

From here, you can make the steep climb straight to the Süleymaniye. But we choose to stay at sea level and continue parallel to the shore into Kutucular Caddesi (Box Makers' Street), home to the best woodworkers, and Küçükpazar.

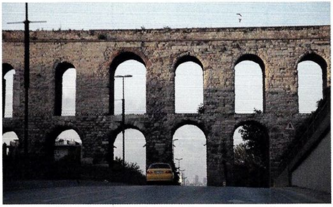
Districts time forgot

Küçükpazar (Little Bazaar) is an urban village where time slows down, the buildings are low, and you can take a bath or a glass of beer. There are lots of working men's cafés, and a gorgeous little hamam, the **Kadın Efendi** – if you want to photograph it, it is only polite to have a bath first. The hottest news here might be the arrival of the latest crop of garlic. Not to be missed.



Küçükpazar Caddesi leads to **Unkapanı** (Flour Depot), just before the Atatürk Bridge, the second of four astonishingly ugly bridges across the Golden Horn. At the end of the street is a surprising piece of modernism: İMÇ, the Istanbul Manufacturers Market, the only mall to rate a CORNUCOPIA mention. It is a series of stepped concrete courtyards 800 yards long with a thousand box-like shops and empty concrete courtyards that ease the climb walking parallel to traffic-snarled Atatürk Bulvarı.

Conceived in the late 1950s, it was intended as a futurist answer to the bazaar, with an open-air atrium at the centre of each block. Later alterations have blunted some of its finer points. Many home designers have wholesale shops here. The lower block (No 6) is a mecca for musical instruments and CDs. **Fa Müzik** on the top floor sells superb archive recordings.



FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG

JÜRGEN FRANK

Hill of monuments

At the top of the İMÇ mall, ask for Vefa, a once-distinguished old district where the great Sinan's entire archive of drawings was lost in a fire in the early 1800s. Head for the timeless **Vefa Bozacısı** and revive yourself with a glass of *boza*, a fermented millet drink to which you add roasted chickpeas. In summer, order the grape juice *şıra*. You are now armed for Architecture with a capital A.

Turning right out of the shop, a seeming dead end twists under an arch in the **Aqueduct of Valens** into the garden of the **Şehzade Mosque**, Sinan's first great mosque – he began with the tomb of the crown prince behind it.

Step into the park in front of the mosque to admire the Valens Aqueduct. Constantinople lacked a good water source within its walls, and the aqueduct, finished in 368, was vital to its survival. This is the final segment of the world's longest ancient aqueduct system, extending deep into the forests of Thrace. At 592km it surpasses the total length of Rome's 11 aqueducts by 72km.

If peckish, abandon our stroll here, cross the boulevard below the aqueduct and walk up to the smart **Zeyrekhane** restaurant next to the **Zeyrek Camii**, the old monastery of Christ Pantokrator. Antique-hunters head the other way, towards the Marmara, to the multi-storey antiques bazaar **Horhor**, a seedy hunting ground rewarding for aficionados.

Returning to the Şehzade, follow the aqueduct towards the university, to the **Kalenderhane Mosque**, a little-visited Byzantine marvel, where frescoes of St Francis of Assisi feeding the birds, now in the Archaeological Museum, were painted a mere 20 years after his death.

You will pass one of the last of the city's old copper tinners, a dying trade. The workshop nests under the last arch of the aqueduct. Up the road, in Ümit Yaşar Doğan Sokak, the **Yeşil Café** is a cheerful student haunt in a fine stone Ottoman schoolhouse. On then to the Süleymaniye. The surrounding hilltop district takes its name from this 16th-century "temple" of Süleyman the Magnificent, which is both triumphal statement and vantage point. From there, it is a quick, if ankle-testing, stroll back down to the Spice Bazaar. Don't miss the button and bead shops on the way. If you have the energy, veer right for the Grand Bazaar.

TRAVEL NOTES

GETTING AROUND

Boats One of the reasons for going to Eminönü is that it is the hub of the ferry network. Stations (*iskele*) along its quay serve Üsküdar and Kadıköy on the Asian shore. A Bosphorus Tour service leaves at 10.35am, returning by 4.10pm. Or take an evening commuter boat to the Bosphorus village of your choice (and a taxi back). Timetables at sehirhatlari.com.tr. The car ferry from Sirkeci to Harem on the Asian side, opposite the Topkapı, runs every 20 mins, 7am–10.30pm (ido.com.tr).

Trams The best way to get to and from Eminönü. Walking up to the Grand Bazaar is arduous, so ride to the top and walk down.

Taxis Eminönü is a bad place for taxis. If you must, get one with a familiar hotel name on the side.

EMİNÖNÜ BITES

Good lunch spots in the Spice Bazaar include **Pandeli** (Mısır Çarşısı 1, +90 212 527 3909) and **Hamdi** (Kalçın Sok 17, +90 212 528 0390), both licensed. At the Süleymaniye, **Kanaat** (+90 212 520 7655) offers bean stew with a grand view, and **Dârüzziyafe** (+90 212 511 8414) a bigger menu in a monumental soup kitchen. Near the Şehzade Mosque, sip *boza* in the **Vefa Bozacısı** (Çelebi Cad 104, +90 212 519 4922).

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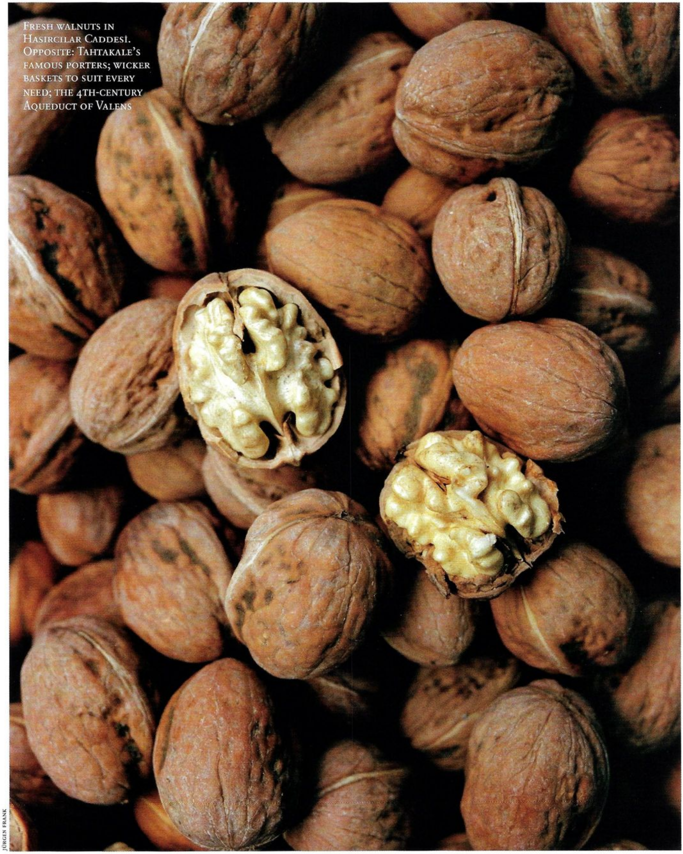


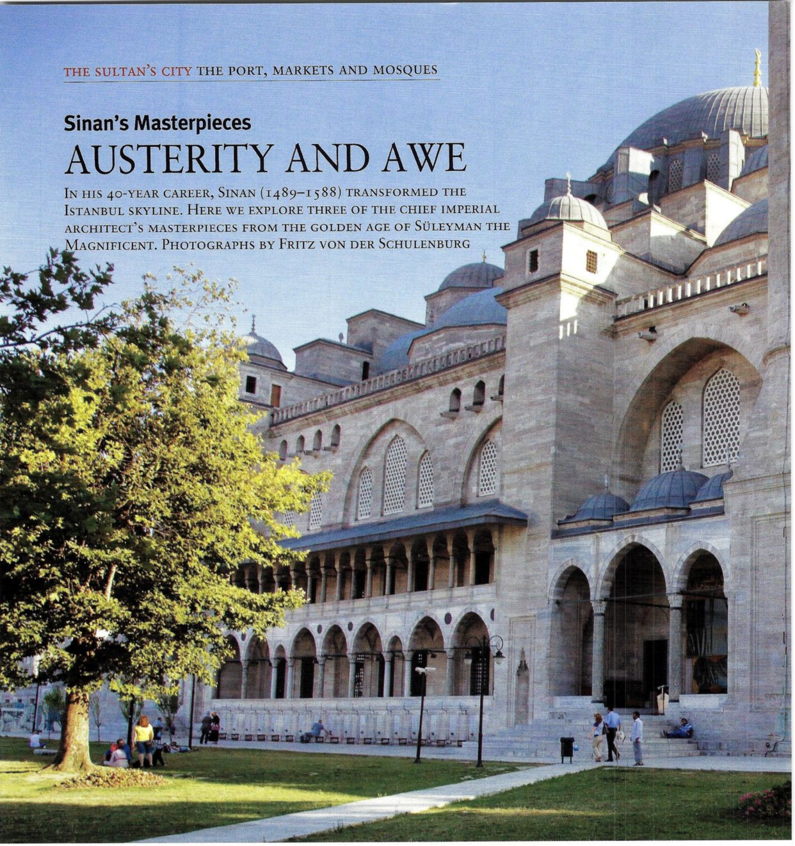
Fresh walnuts in Hasircilar Caddesi. Opposite: Tahtakale's famous porters; wicker baskets to suit every need; the 4th-century Aqueduct of Valens

JÜRGEN FRANK

Sinan's Masterpieces

AUSTERITY AND AWE

In his 40-year career, Sinan (1489–1588) transformed the Istanbul skyline. Here we explore three of the chief imperial architect's masterpieces from the golden age of Süleyman the Magnificent. Photographs by Fritz von der Schulenburg



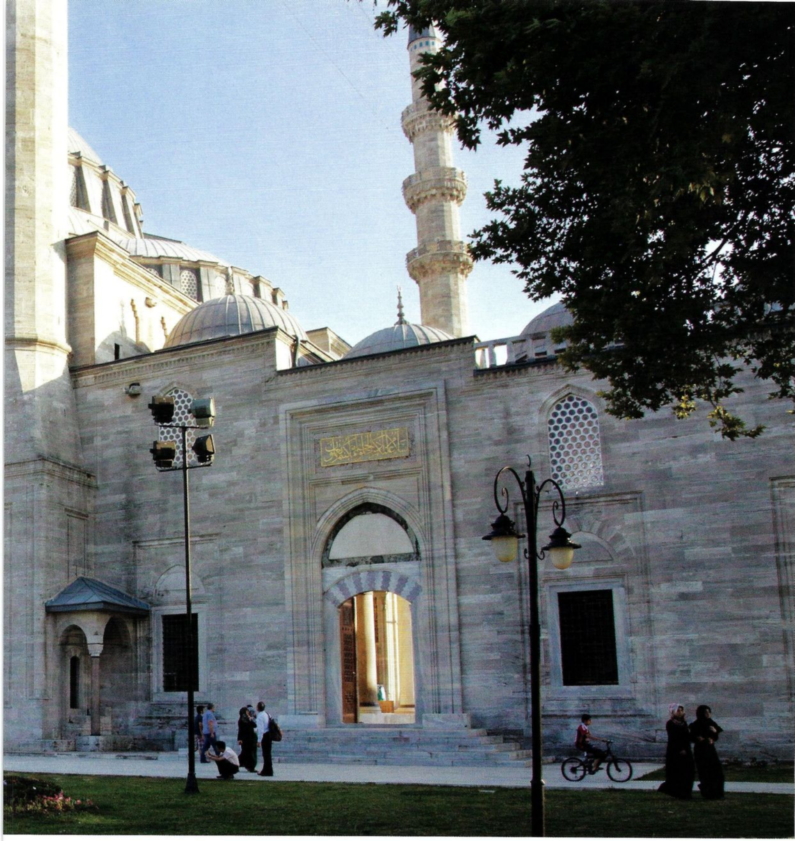
SÜLEYMANİYE MOSQUE

Sinan 1544–55

The Süleymaniye towers over the Golden Horn, on a phenomenal man-made terrace, surrounded by a lush green outer courtyard crisscrossed with diagonal paths, and with shady plane trees in the corners. On the northern side, a magnificent esplanade looks down a cascade of medrese domes to the Golden Horn, the Bosphorus and the Topkapı Palace. The complex has recently been restored, and the ashlar stone is a little too pristine – no doubt time will soften it.

Sinan only came to mosque-building in his fifties. He would build more than 100 complexes over the next four decades, as well as numerous bridges and aqueducts even more costly than the grandest mosques.

The Süleymaniye is the most imposing of Sinan's three great imperial mosques, though he dismissed it as his "journeyman

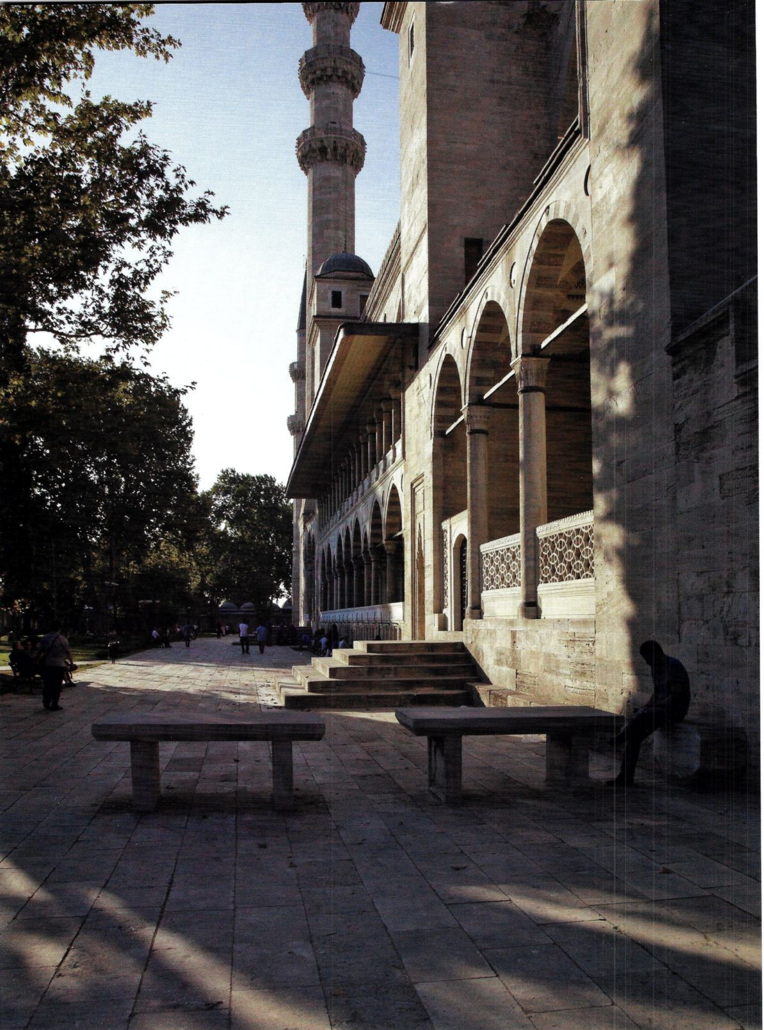


work". It shares a hilltop with the Şehzade Mosque, his "apprenticeship" (page 96); the Selimiye in Edirne (1568–74), his "masterwork", is an easy day's outing by bus.

Work began on the mighty Süleymaniye in 1548, as soon as the Şehzade, built for Süleyman the Magnificent as a memorial to his late son, was completed. Süleyman had cause to celebrate: with the Holy Roman Emperor forced to sue for peace in Hungary, the tenth Ottoman sultan assumed the mantle of Roman Emperor. And after a victory over the Safavid Shah Tahmasp of Persia – who agreed to stop cursing Sunni caliphs at prayer time – he could justifiably claim the title of universal sultan and caliph. In Turkish Süleyman is Kanunî, "the Lawgiver". It was time for a "Temple of Solomon".

The Süleymaniye would outdo all earlier mosques, just as

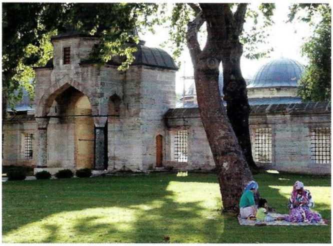
THE SÜLEYMANİYE, ISTANBUL'S MOST CELEBRATED MOSQUE, WITH ITS GRAND SILHOUETTE OF DOMES. SINAN INTENDED VISITORS TO GO UP TO THE ROOF TO ENJOY THE VIEWS FROM THE WINDOWS IN THE SMALL, DOMED BELVEDERES

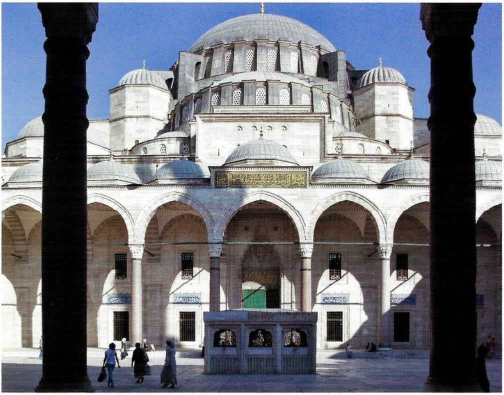


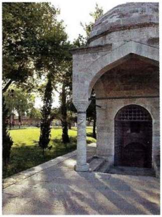
the Şehzade was a composite of their best elements. Marble *spolia* were brought from all over the empire – the Hippodrome was a useful nearby source.

The mosque was to be a great centre of learning and law. The five medreses devoted to theology were called "the five pillars of Islamic learning". A sixth was a medical school run by the sultan's chief physician. You still find a maternity clinic, a working hamam, and scholars from all over the world poring over rare manuscripts in the library.

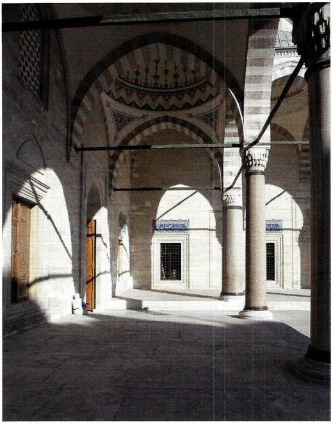
The vistas strike you first, as you walk around this ideal Renaissance city built in stone. Sinan is constantly surprising us with views of domes and minarets at the end of narrow alleys, across leafy courtyards, often framed with arched doorways. Although he expected us to climb the stairs to the roof to see the magnificent prospect of the Golden Horn and the Bosphorus, this has







A series of increasingly impressive views greeted Süleyman as he processed from a narrow street into the mosque's garden (top right), through an imposing gate (above left) into the monumental courtyard (left)
Opposite Ablution fountains line the mosque's side walls
Above A discreet door leads to Sinan's tomb at the northwest corner of the complex



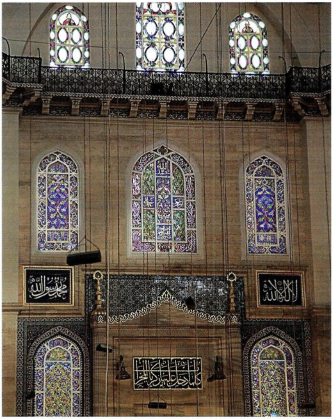
never been allowed in living memory, but would be enchanting to restore.

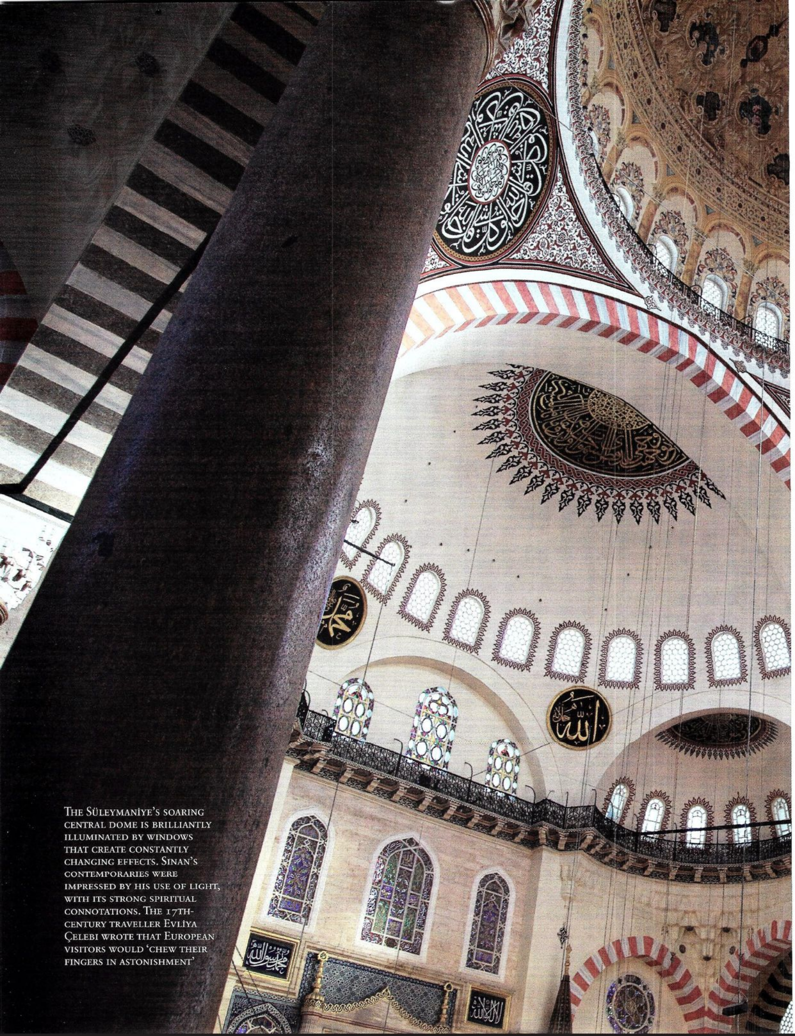
Ottomans were masters of the procession as grand political statement – hence their extravagantly patterned kaftans (with carnations 2ft across). Friday prayers were the perfect excuse. On your first visit, follow the sultan's route, not from the square beside the mosque, as you might expect, but from the lane in front of it. Then, as you move from the outer to the inner court, the processional route reaches a climax in the domed interior. Huge stone piers frame a distant wall ablaze with tiles and stained glass. This is architectural drama of the highest order.

In all this grandeur, Sinan never forgot the human scale. All his mosques are conducive to meditation: you can sit anywhere on the huge carpeted floor, and spread your picnic rug in the garden. To best appreciate the interior, illuminated with low-hung lights and shafts of sunshine, especially beautiful in the early evening, sit on the carpet in the aisle closest to the Golden Horn – even standing up distorts the view.

The best guide to Sinan's mosques is Gülru Necipoğlu's weighty tome *The Age of Sinan: Architectural Culture in the Ottoman Empire*. In it she quotes the contemporary court historian Lokman. Unlike the dark, mysteriously lit basilica of Ayasofya, he describes how all four sides of the Süleymaniye "are opened up with pleasure-increasing windows in multiple layers, from which Space and Time are exposed".

Above, left and right The courtyard with ancient porphyry columns. Koranic verses in the tiles above the windows remind worshippers that those who pray regularly 'will dwell in gardens, honoured'
Right The mihrab wall is enlivened by stained glass and panels of Iznik tiles
Opposite The grand finale is the domed interior

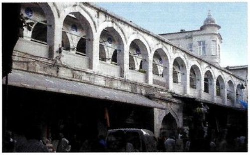


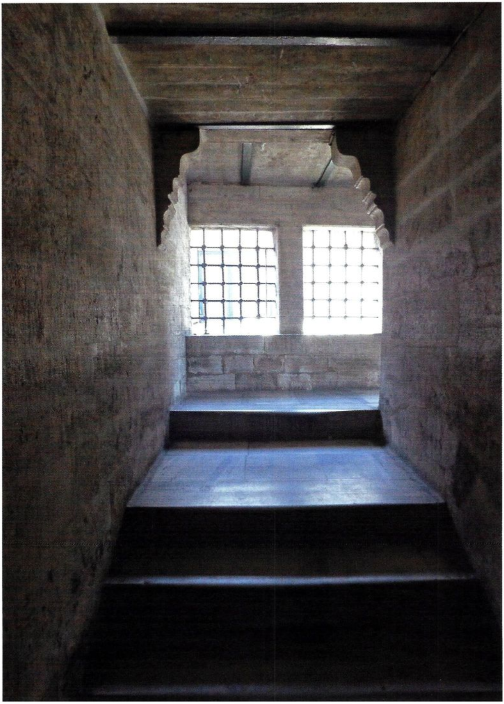


THE SÜLEYMANİYE'S SOARING CENTRAL DOME IS BRILLIANTLY ILLUMINATED BY WINDOWS THAT CREATE CONSTANTLY CHANGING EFFECTS. SINAN'S CONTEMPORARIES WERE IMPRESSED BY HIS USE OF LIGHT, WITH ITS STRONG SPIRITUAL CONNOTATIONS. THE 17TH-CENTURY TRAVELLER EVLİYA ÇELEBI WROTE THAT EUROPEAN VISITORS WOULD 'CHEW THEIR FINGERS IN ASTONISHMENT'

RÜSTEM PASHA MOSQUE

SINAN, 1561–63





To luxuriate in Iznik tilework from the height of its golden age, take the unpromising stone stairs up to the Rüstem Pasha Mosque in Tahtakale, in Eminönü's bustling markets, ducking low to avoid the iron rivets. In 1563, Sinan's contemporaries must have been amazed. Tiles had never been seen in a grand vizier's mosque, and were never seen again on this scale. A fitting memorial to Süleyman the Magnificent's grand vizier, son-in-law and financial genius, from Mihrimah, his wife. The location of the mosque at the commercial heart of the empire was no accident.

Seen from the sea, the dome floats in the shadow of his master's mosque. In the street outside, you are unaware of its existence – two doorways are the only clues. This is another of Sinan's visual tricks. Climb to the terrace to enjoy the blaze of colour indoors.

The mosque is beautifully proportioned but small enough, and tourists few enough, for you to immerse yourself in Iznik tiles (you can even run your hands over them). They cover everything from piers to prayer niches, in colours running from rich blues and faded turquoise to the Iznik red seen in the Süleymaniye, completed two years earlier.

This was Iznik's chance to prove itself. The wild abandon in the panel outside the main door was quite simply never surpassed. Here is a master determined to show what Iznik was capable of. These tiles predate those inside, according to the Iznik authority John Carswell, who suggests they were made deliberately to impress the late grand vizier's wife, a leading patron of architecture. In the gallery is a second, damaged panel – a mad abstract patchwork. The aubergine-coloured branches in both panels, Carswell says, derive from chinoiserie rock formations.

TOP ROW THE PORTICO OF THE RÜSTEM PASHA MOSQUE, HIDDEN FROM THE STREET BELOW
LEFT ONE OF THE DISCREET STONE STAIRCASES WHICH GIVE THE ONLY ACCESS TO THE MOSQUE
OPPOSITE THE VIBRANT IZNIK TILES OUTSIDE THE MAIN DOOR ARE REMARKABLY INVENTIVE

BRIAN MCKEE

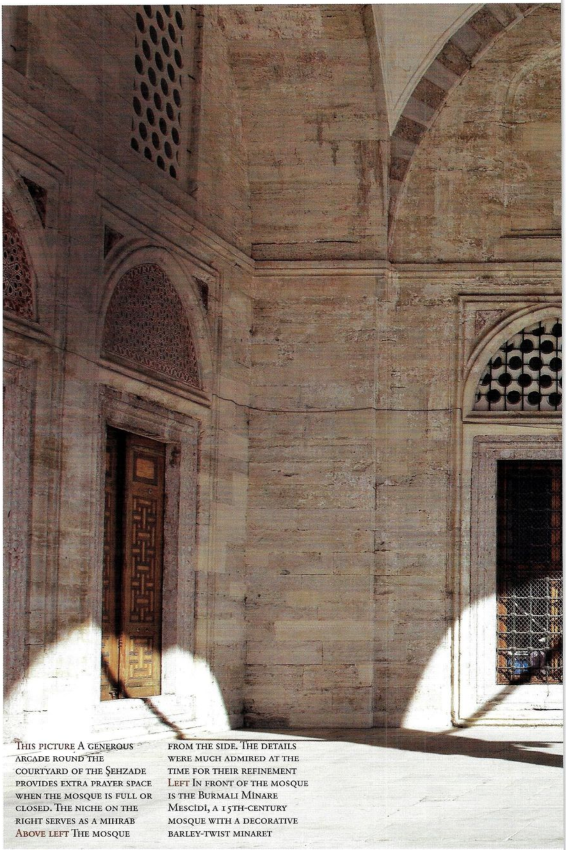
JÜRGEN FRANK

ŞEHZADE MEHMED MOSQUE

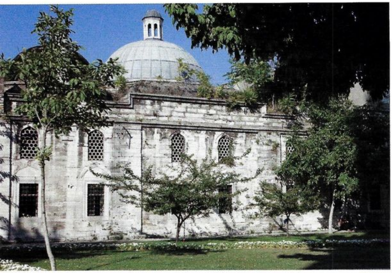
SINAN 1544–55

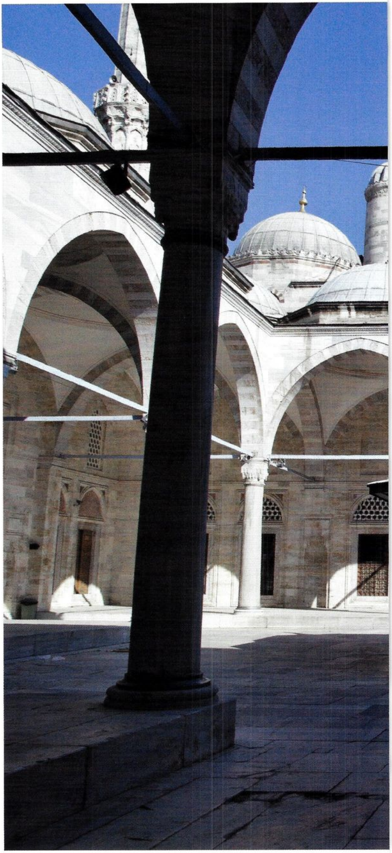
In her book *The Age of Sinan* Gülru Necipoğlu describes the first of Sinan's great trio of sultanic masterpieces as a mosque "to defeat grief". The Şehzade is a memorial to Süleyman the Magnificent's heir, "the most distinguished among princes, my son Mehmed". This was a chronogram penned by Süleyman, whose characters deliberately added up to the year of his son's death, 1543.

The *şehzade* (crown prince) had died at 22 when his father was on his way back from a victorious campaign in Hungary. For two-and-a-half hours the sultan wept by his grave beside the Divan Yolu, the street leading past the mosques of his



THIS PICTURE A GENEROUS ARCADE ROUND THE COURTYARD OF THE ŞEHZADE PROVIDES EXTRA PRAYER SPACE WHEN THE MOSQUE IS FULL OR CLOSED. THE NICHE ON THE RIGHT SERVES AS A MIHRAB ABOVE LEFT THE MOSQUE FROM THE SIDE. THE DETAILS WERE MUCH ADMIRED AT THE TIME FOR THEIR REFINEMENT LEFT IN FRONT OF THE MOSQUE IS THE BURMALI MINARE MESCIDİ, A 15TH-CENTURY MOSQUE WITH A DECORATIVE BARLEY-TWIST MINARET



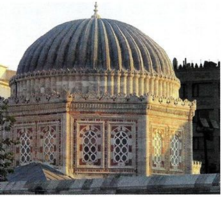


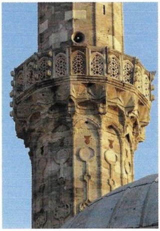
forebears; for 40 days, clad in black, he attended prayers.

Sinan was given the task of commemorating the prince in 1544; though well past his 50th birthday, he had barely begun his 40-year career as chief royal architect. A proven engineer, he pulled down part of the aqueduct to ensure the mosque could be seen across the Golden Horn: a siphon kept the water flowing.

The octagonal mausoleum of Şehzade Mehmed was built by Sinan before he started on the mosque. The two buildings are united by their toothed cornices and by the fluted domes of the mausoleum and of the smaller towers, known as weight towers.

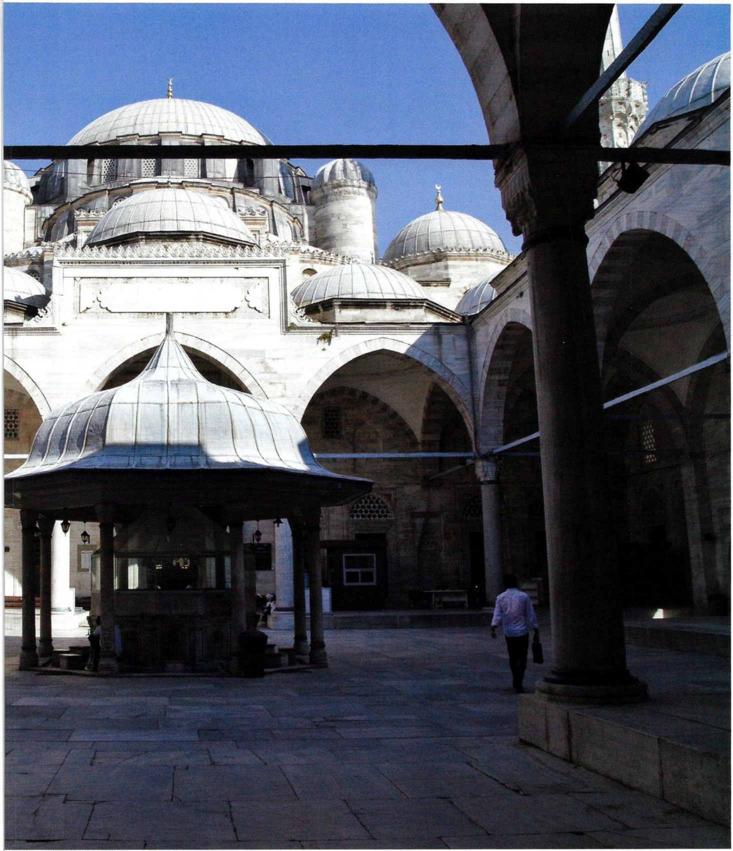
According to Sinan's memoirs, this was his "apprenticeship", and there is a lighter, younger touch to the architecture, making it gentler than the Süleymaniye's more severe lines. There are endless details for the eye to dwell on – note the lamps inlaid in red sandstone below the balconies.





RIGHT THE ŞEHZADE, WITH ITS ARRAY OF DOMES AND ITS OGIVAL-ROOFED ABLUTION FOUNTAIN AT THE CENTRE OF THE COURTYARD TOP LEFT THE COMPLEX INCLUDED A CARAVANSERAI WITH STABLES, HOSPICE AND SCHOOLS, AND A BUILDING FOR GUESTS, SEEN HERE ABOVE ONE OF THE PAIR OF MINARETS REFLECTING THE PRINCE'S STATUS AS HEIR APPARENT; THE DELICATE CARVING 'BEWILDERED THE MIND OF THE BEHOLDER', SAID EVLIYA ÇELEBI LEFT THE OCTAGONAL MAUSOLEUM OF ŞEHZADE MEHMED WAS BUILT BY SINAN BEFORE THE MOSQUE, BUT THE TWO SHARE A DECORATIVE STYLE

'The Age of Sinan: Architectural Culture in the Ottoman Empire', by Gülru Necipoğlu (Reaktion), is available from cornucopia.net at £60, post-free to subscribers



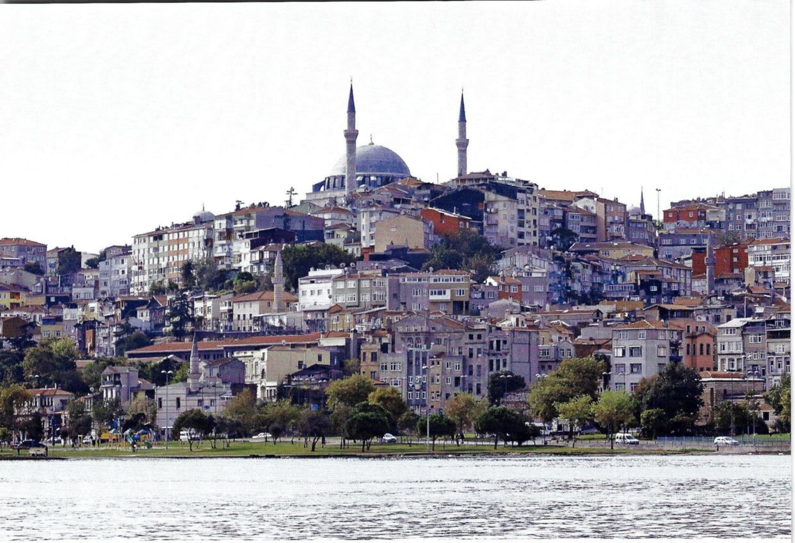
The Golden Horn

HORN OF PLENTY

It is a joy to explore. New universities, a new museum, and a growing band of new aficionados who have invested modest means in old houses, have created a wonderful sense of optimism. But the ancient waterfront is in the eye of the storm, with many quarters due to be bulldozed, and the threat of a hideous new marina. Enjoy it while you can

JÜRGEN FRANK

Setting off down the Golden Horn is the Hiawatha, built in 1932 for the American embassy's use on the Bosphorus. The launch has now joined the Rahmi Koç Museum collection of historic vessels in Hasköy



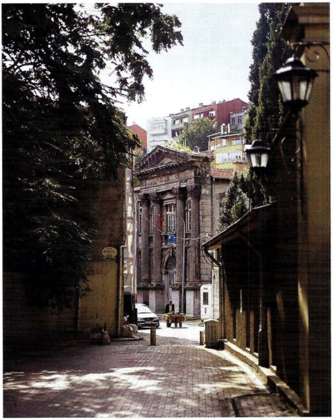
The Golden Horn is the cornucopia-shaped inlet that divides the peninsula of old Istanbul from the old European quarters. Few inner-city districts have changed so dramatically. In recent memory it was an industrial zone of small workshops with a 1920s abattoir and the Ottoman naval shipyard, its waters an evil soup of industrial waste and sewage. Now they are sweet again.

The east side is Istanbul's new museum district, notable for the attractive Rahmi Koç Museum of science and technology. The slaughterhouse at Sütlüce is no more, though restaurants specialising in sweetbreads and other offal survive. It is now a welcome convention centre, even if it squats on the coast, with no easy way for pedestrians or joggers to get round it.

Other changes are very much not for the better. A needlessly elevated and elaborate bridge for the new metro line blocks the iconic view of the Süleymaniye, and there are plans to blight the area further with a new marina. The west side of the inlet is home to interesting places of worship – the Orthodox Patriarchate at Fener and the nearby Bulgarian Orthodox Church of St Stephen, built of cast-iron sections floated down the Danube from Vienna.

At the top of the Golden Horn is the holy shrine of Eyüp, burial place of the Prophet's standard-bearer and a busy site of pilgrimage. A cable car takes visitors up to the tea gardens frequented in the 19th century by the flamboyant French author Pierre Loti. From here the entire Golden Horn is on view.

Above The old walled city districts of Fener and Balat. At the top on the left is the Yavuz Selim Mosque; on the right a new koran school next to the red-brick Greek lycée and, on the shore, the Bulgarian Orthodox Church
Bottom row from left A Neoclassical Greek school beside the Patriarchate; the imposing lycée; Turkey's first mass-produced car, the Anadol; Kasımpaşa's historic dockyard



JÜRGEN FRANK

AKMA

The view from the hills of the Old City above the Golden Horn. Across the water is the old European quarter. The conical-roofed Galata Tower was built by the Genoese in the 14th century to guard their own walled city, a century before the Turkish conquest of Constantinople

AROUND THE HORN

Step aboard a ferry boat and set off on a mini-odyssey

The passenger ferry sets out from Üsküdar on the Asian side of the Bosphorus for the Golden Horn every half hour, a modest barge grudgingly laid on by the municipality, rather than the grand old tin tub of the old Maritime Lines. Most people join it at the quay in **Karaköy**, across the Golden Horn from the Old City. But doing the whole journey from the Asian side is a good way to grasp the contrast between Bosphorus and Golden Horn. Blow the cobwebs away in a snow-bearing north-easterly *poyraz* as the boat cuts across the crisp currents before slipping under the Galata Bridge, bristling with fishing rods, into the calm of what, for most residents, is a forgotten world. This is the territory of intrepid explorers in the mould of John Freely and Hilary Sumner-Boyd, authors of the legendary (and 40 years on, slightly confusing) *Strolling Through Istanbul*.

From Karaköy, the boat passes under three ugly bridges – the latest a new metro bridge with horns (absurd literalness) – and a dockyard built by the Conqueror. The first stop is **Kasımpaşa**, with its 19th-century Venetian Gothic admiralty building, scene of Ottoman diplomatic battles with the Great Powers over the Eastern Question. A reason to go ashore, if you don't mind a trek or a taxi ride, is the Piyale Pasha Mosque, with its many domes of equal size, built by Sinan for an admiral of the fleet.

After the remnants of the old Galata pontoon bridge, its ironwork painted bright turquoise, comes **Hasköy**. Here the science and technology museum of the great industrialist Mr Koç offers many delights – a Dakota aircraft, a submarine and a jolly good French brasserie. Nearby is a charming legacy of the Tulip Period, the sultan's "mirrored pavilion" of Aynalıkavak.

ABOVE SMALL BOATS WILL HAPPILY TAKE YOU UP THE GOLDEN HORN TO EYÜP OR DOWN TO EMİNÖNÜ
RIGHT AN ICON OF THE VIRGIN AND CHILD IN THE CHURCH OF ST MARY OF THE MONGOLS IN FENER, JUST BELOW THE YAVUZ SELIM MOSQUE. THE LAST BYZANTINE CHURCH STILL IN USE WAS FOUNDED BY MARY, THE EMPEROR'S DAUGHTER WHO MARRIED A MONGOLIAN KHAN
OPPOSITE THE CHURCH OF ST GEORGE IN THE GREEK ORTHODOX PATRIARCHATE

The boat now crosses the Horn, for reasons unknown bypassing the boat station of **Fener**, which gave its name to the Phanariots, the Greek elite in Istanbul, who prospered mightily under the Ottomans. It is still the home of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate. Dominating the hill above is the colossal red-brick Greek lycée, while down on the shore you can't miss a strangely Gothic apparition: the Bulgarian Orthodox church, a Viennese iron prefab. A bad outbreak of rust is being dealt with.

Instead, the boat carries on to **Ayvansaray**, just below the tremendous final stretch of the Theodosian Land Walls, onto which the Byzantine emperors built their last Istanbul palace. Woefully, no one was able to protect the lower part of Ayvansaray from assault last year by men with bulldozers, who flattened it to build something unpleasant in concrete – a harbinger of things to come?

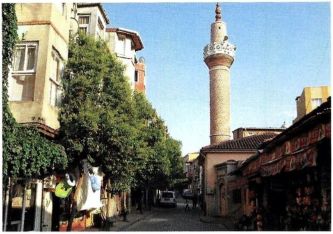
The last stop, **Eyüp**, is not quite at the top of the estuary, but far enough up to feel positively landlocked.

The Golden Horn is dramatic from a distance, and close up there are myriad quirky surprises to discover. But the middle distance is an acquired taste: don't expect picture-postcard scenery. The hills are too weary, too old, too built-up to live up to the name. But the sunsets are magical, and the cypresses of the old cemeteries above Hasköy are a reminder of the woods that once led up to the archery grounds of Okmeydan.

CLIVE CROOK

A WORLD WITHIN THE WALLS

STROLL INSIDE THE BYZANTINE LAND WALLS – FROM THE OLD BOAT-BUILDING QUARTER TO THE POLYGLOT DISTRICT OF FENER – FOR A TASTE OF WHAT OLD ISTANBUL WAS ALL ABOUT



Jump off the ferry at Ayvansaray, where the Byzantine Land Walls come down to the western shore of the Golden Horn and are at their tallest and most dramatic. In the warm light of evening they positively glow. Across the park and busy main road, a narrow lane leads to the walled garden of the **Church of Vlaherna (Blachernae)** opposite "Maria's Pub", which isn't really a pub, but has a charm all the same. The gate is locked at 5pm.

The shrine is looked after by a family from Antakya and has been here since 451. It contains a holy spring in an enchanted grotto. The words above the fountain read: "Wash not your face but your thoughts." Millions of people have visited over the past 1,500 years, and couples often come from Greece to get married. Legend has it that a secret tunnel dating from around 400 leads from the well chamber for about eight kilometres to Ayasofya. The current church, built in 1862, is beautifully proportioned.

Nine centuries, and a slog up Dervişzade Sokak, separates the shrine from the **Kariye**, the 14th-century **Church of the Chora**, described on page 154. While you are up there, you might continue to the newly restored **Mihrimah Sultan** (next to the reconstructed Edirnekapı gate), Sinan's airiest mosque, with a single dome on tall walls generously filled with windows. Sadly, two of the treats on the way have been wrecked.

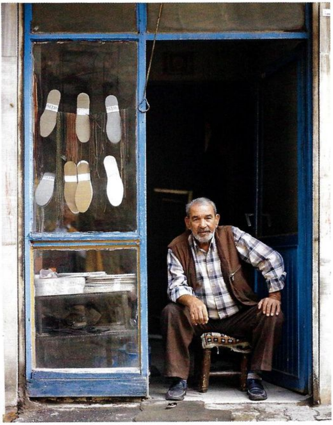
Tekfur Sarayı, a palace of brick and stone, which we cannot bring ourselves to illustrate, was the most beautifully proportioned ruin in Istanbul. It now has a grotesque modern roof where before it had none.

Then there is the **İvaz Efendi Mosque**, where Sinan uses the same Byzantine bands of flat brick and stone. It is pretty enough inside, with slim marble columns, but the reason for going has been lost. It was built

TOP THE TAHTA MİNARE MOSQUE IN A PRETTY SQUARE IN BALAT
LEFT TRACES OF FENER'S FORMER AFFLUENCE: OLD TOWN HOUSES WITH JETTIED UPPER STOREYS ('CUMBA')
OPPOSITE INDUSTRIAL PIPING AND FRESHLY SQUEEZED POMEGRANATES

JÜRGEN FRANK

JÜRGEN FRANK



JÜRGEN FRANK

on top of a partially ruined tower in the Land Walls, and the stunning view of Eyüp is now obscured by another daft roof.

The lovely **Eğrikapı** gate survives untouched, with its lane leading into a pretty graveyard outside the walls, full of turbaned gravestones predating the 1825 ban on turbans.

May Zeus hurl a thunderbolt at anyone who lays a finger on the charming village inside the gate, with its square full of dignified men sitting over tea and backgammon boards, often with a fish-seller looking on. The café has a mural of a mountain that stretches all the way to the back, where a tea kettle bubbles away to supply the gentlemen.

This is what old Istanbul was all about. A clock in a ship's-wheel frame is a reminder that Ayvansaray was famed for its builders of wooden boats. There were still a few workshops here a decade ago, where concrete is now being poured into a naff outsized housing development.

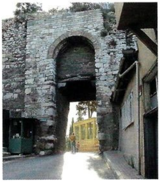
Follow the road inside the line of the sea walls, through the districts of **Balat** and **Fener**, for more of the same delightful urban village life. Sometimes ancient masonry peeps through bits of collapsed house. You can pick up *krikrak* (bread sticks) at the historic bakers, the **Tarihi Taş Fırın**, get your watch repaired at the *saatçı*, Saadettin, even buy a piano. The main road is out of sight and out of earshot.

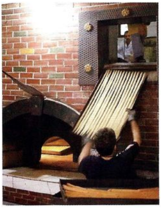
As you continue downstream, eventually you come to the **Greek Orthodox Patriarchate**, whose church has a glowing, glittering interior and on Sundays a segregated chatty congregation. On the hill above it are the **Yavuz Selim Mosque**, the **Church of St Mary of the Mongols** and the **Fethiye Mosque**, the former Pammakaristos Church, with its fine mosaics (see page 168).

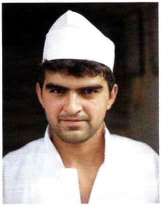
Carry on farther downstream to **Kadir Has University**, an inspired conversion of the Cibalı cigarette factory, which has a private archaeological collection.

The Golden Horn was at the heart of the Ottoman industrial revolution, one reason for the relaxed and inclusive ethos of the down-to-earth districts at sea level. This was probably the first place in Istanbul where women worked on a production line.

After all these exertions, join the local salts of the earth at a proper, old-fashioned eating place. The minuscule Albanian köfte shop, **Arnavut Köfteci**, on the coast road (Mürselpaşa Cad 155), does scrumptious *köfte*, *piyaz* (bean salad) and creamy tripe soup. Or if it is a mild evening, and preferably not a match night, join the men on the roof terrace at **Hüseyin'in Yeri** in Balat. Enjoy a slow rakı and meyhane meze with a Georgian twist and survey all you have conquered.







OPPOSITE A MAN SELLS 'POĞAÇA', A SAVOURY BREAKFAST BUN, IN FENER
ABOVE A COBBLER IN THE NEIGHBOURING DISTRICT OF BALAT
ABOVE RIGHT THE EĞRİKAPI, A PICTURESQUE GATE WITHIN ONE OF THE MOST UNSPOILT STRETCHES OF THE LAND WALLS
FAR RIGHT A BAKER AT THE TARİHİ TAŞ FIRIN (THE HISTORIC STONE OVEN BAKERS) IN BALAT
RIGHT AND BOTTOM RIGHT FRESH BREAD STICKS ('KRİKKRAK')
BELOW THE IMMACULATE ALBANIAN KÖFTE SHOP ON THE COAST ROAD AT FENER

FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG

Yavuz Selim Mosque

GREY POWER

SÜLEYMAN THE MAGNIFICENT'S FIRST CONTRIBUTION TO ISTANBUL'S SKYLINE WAS THE RESTRAINED BUT AWE-INSPIRING MOSQUE HE BUILT FOR HIS VICTORIOUS FATHER, SELIM I.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG

Like Rome and San Francisco, Istanbul has seven hills. The domes and minarets that crown them are still city landmarks.

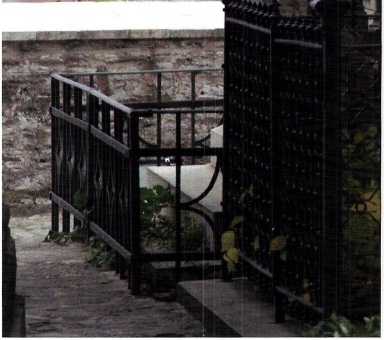
Ayasofya marks the First Hill; the Baroque Nuruosmaniye and the Grand Bazaar crown the Second; the Third has the Süleymaniye; the Fourth the Fatih Mosque. The Mosque of Selim I (Yavuz Selim) dominates the Fifth. And Sinan's Mihrimah Sultan Mosque on the Land Walls tops the Sixth. The Seventh was full of gardens, up to the Topkapı gate on the Land Walls (not to be confused with the Topkapı Palace at the far end of the city), and, having no prominent domes, is barely discernible.

Selim I (1512–20), nicknamed "Yavuz" – "the Steadfast" or as translated by hostile foreigners "the Grim" – was an able military ruler who added Egypt, Syria and the Holy Places to the empire, and returned with the Holy Relics now in the Topkapı. So preoccupied was he with campaigning that it was left to his son Süleyman the Magnificent to build a mosque in his honour. Süleyman transformed Istanbul's skyline, and the Yavuz Selim Mosque was his first landmark.

The mosque crowns the Fifth Hill, with the Golden Horn on one side and, on the other, an open cistern big enough to house a large village (as it did until the 1980s). It was built by Sinan's predecessor, Acem Ali, said to have been brought back by Selim as a captive from the east.

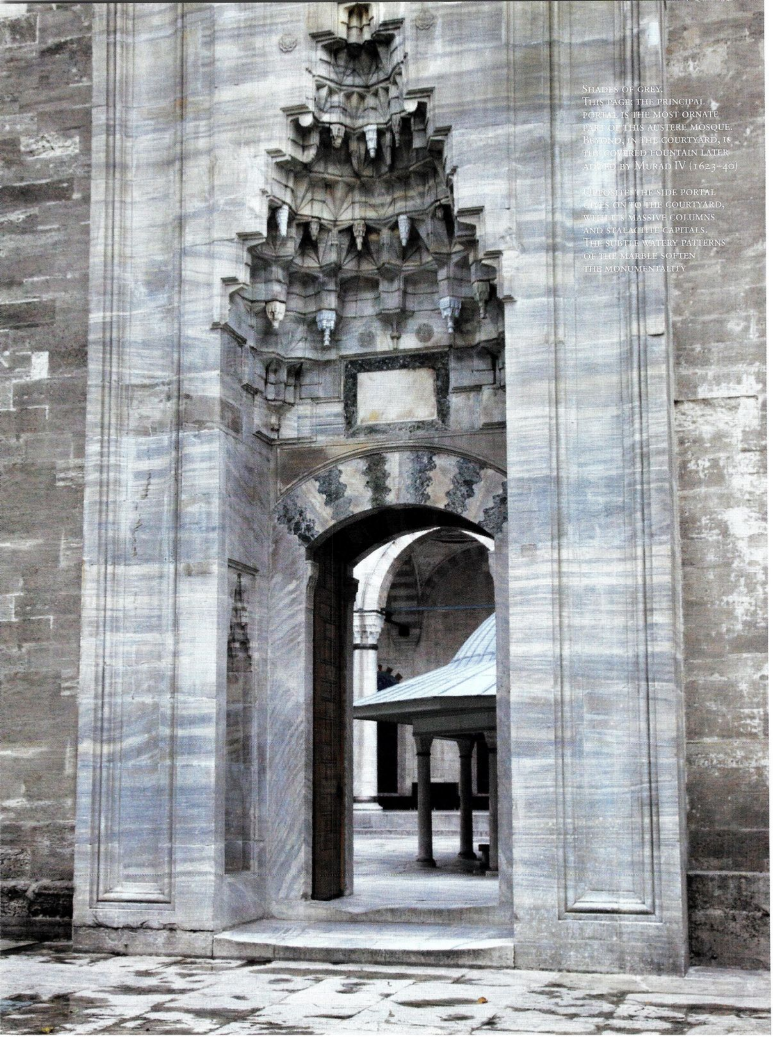
An oasis of Ottoman rigour, the Yavuz Selim is pure geometry: a hemisphere of lead surmounting a cube of grey ashlar. It stands in marked contrast to the intricacy and illusions of the nearby Byzantine places of worship, the Fethiye and St Mary of the Mongols.

When you visit, don't miss the splendid painted ceiling of the sultan's loggia or the dervish hospice (*tabhane*). And be sure to step behind the mosque to the tombs. Buried here are Selim I, four of Süleyman's children, and, improbably, Abdülmecid I, the 19th-century sultan who abandoned the Topkapı in favour of his ultra-European Dolmabahçe Palace. Yet it was here, with his ancestors, that he chose to be laid to rest.



The 1558 Süleymaniye, with its cascade of domes, rises moodily on the horizon. This view is from a terrace of the Yavuz Selim on the Fifth Hill

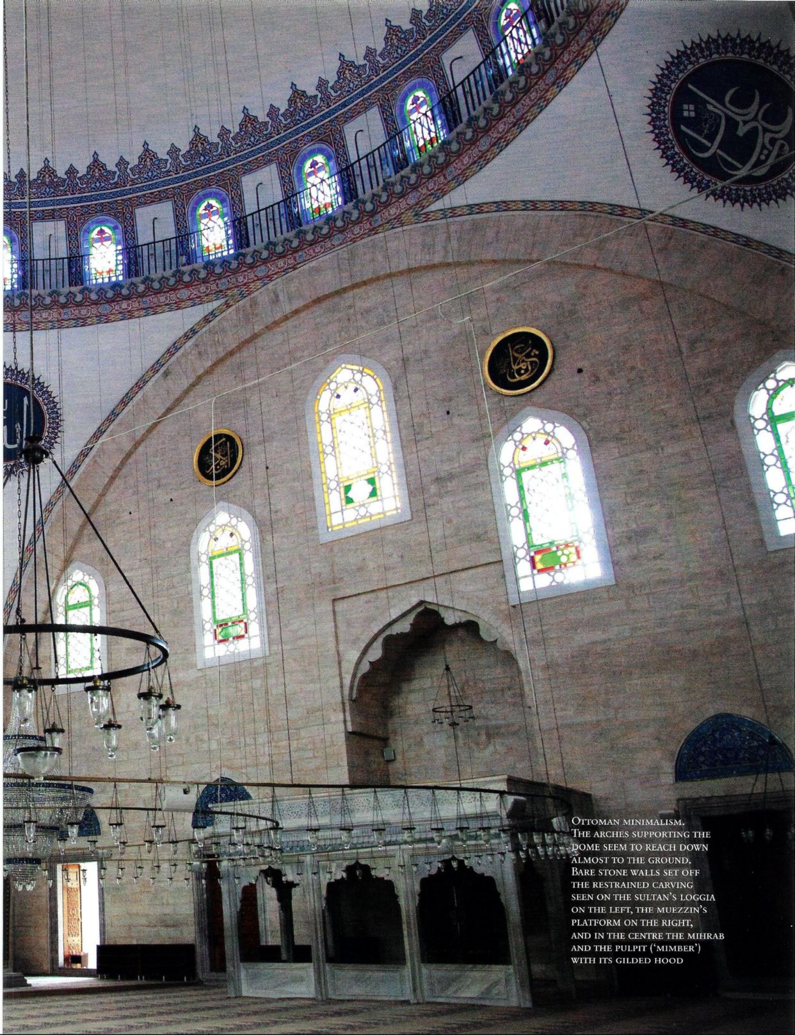
Opposite: the Yavuz Selim Mosque, 1522, with its grand single dome and flying buttresses. It was finished within two years of Selim I's death, along with a school, soup kitchen, hospices, and baths for men and women



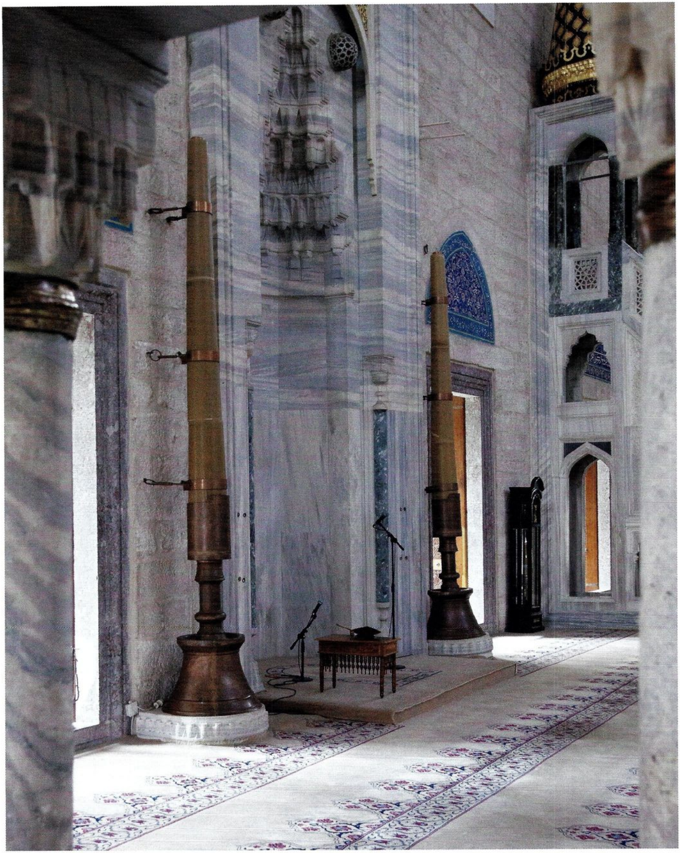
Shades of grey. This page: the principal portal is the most ornate part of this austere mosque. Beyond, in the courtyard, is the covered fountain later added by Murad IV (1623–40)

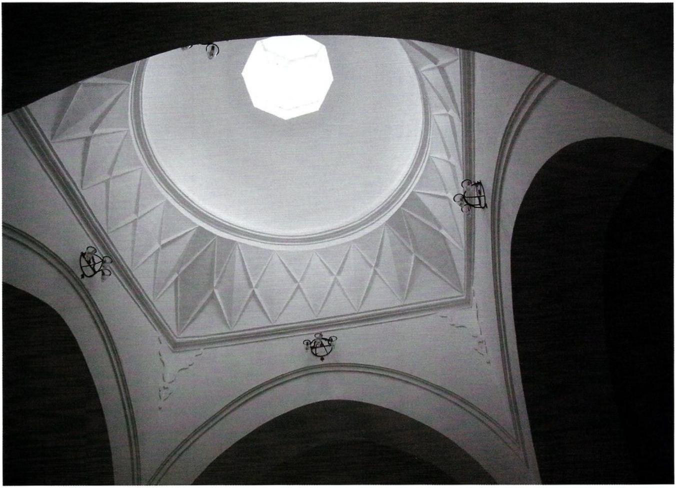
Opposite: the side portal gives on to the courtyard, with its massive columns and stalactite capitals. The subtle watery patterns of the marble soften the monumentality

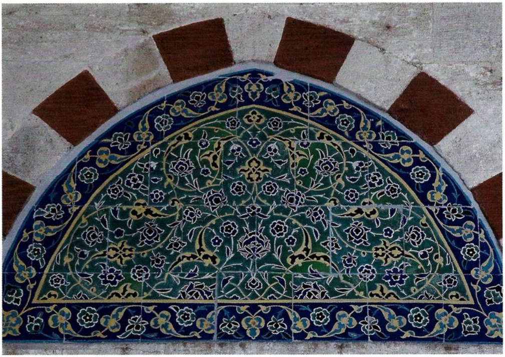
محمد
محمد
الله



Ottoman minimalism. The arches supporting the dome seem to reach down almost to the ground. Bare stone walls set off the restrained carving seen on the sultan's loggia on the left, the muezzin's platform on the right, and in the centre the mihrab and the pulpit ('mimber') with its gilded hood



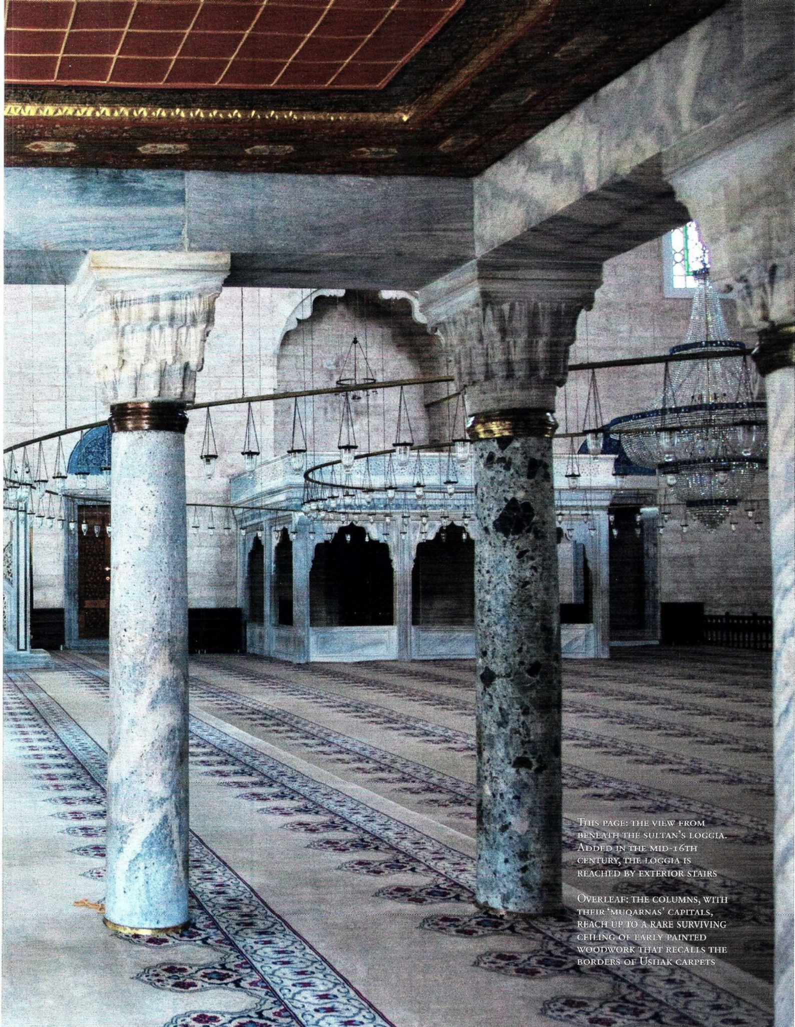




Above The central dome in one of the hospices ('tabhane') on either side of the mosque. Travellers could stay there free for three days. Hospices, often found in early mosques, played an important part in the expansion of the empire

Opposite The mihrab is flanked by giant beeswax candles. The overall simplicity highlights the rare 'cuerda seca' tiles above the windows

Left Lunettes with 'cuerda seca' tiles also appear outside. This technique, introduced from Persia in the 14th century, separated areas of colour using wax, which left thin bands of unglazed tile (the 'cuerda seca', or dry rope). These tiles were made in Iznik before its artisans developed the free-form underglaze technique for which the town is famous



This page: the view from beneath the sultan's loggia. Added in the mid-16th century, the loggia is reached by exterior stairs

Overleaf: the columns, with their 'muqarnas' capitals, reach up to a rare surviving ceiling of early painted woodwork that recalls the borders of Ushak carpets

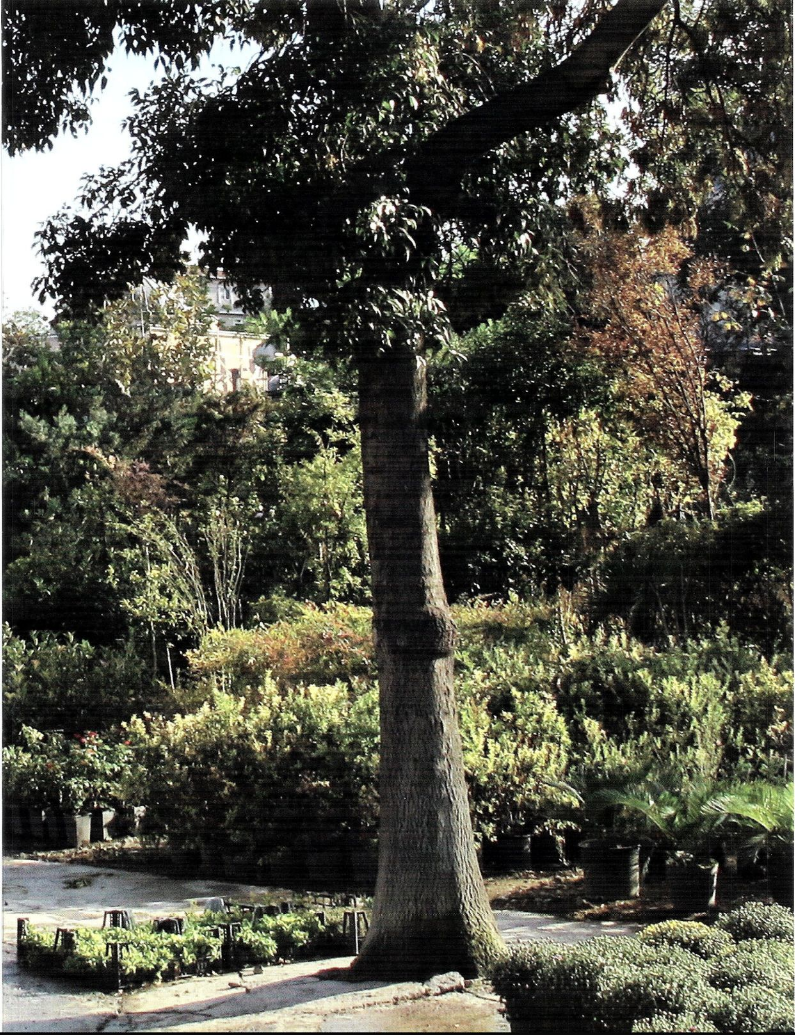
Minor masterpiece: the Zal Mahmud Pasha Mosque in Eyüp, built for a daughter of Murad III (1574–95). Sinan picturesquely angled the medrese classrooms for the best view of the Golden Horn

Eyüp

BLESSED AND BESIEGED

Berrin Torolsan

Eyüp, at the top of the Golden Horn, has been a magnet for pilgrims since 1453, when a miraculous vision assured the Ottomans of victory. The faithful still flock to its shrine, one of the holiest in the Muslim world, and to the quarter's inspired sacred architecture

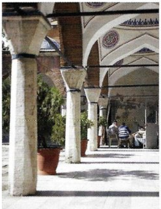


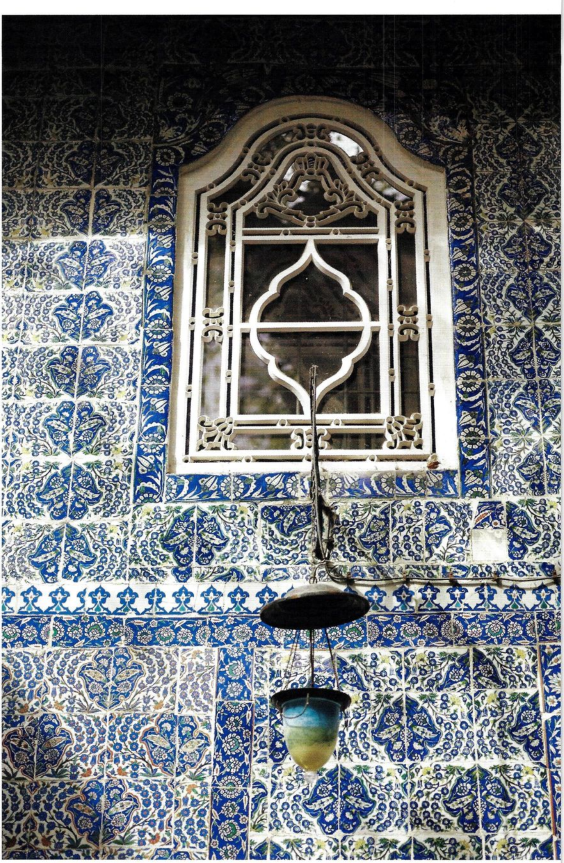
Before the Bosphorus became fashionable in the later 18th century, Eyüp and the upper reaches of the Golden Horn were *the* place to live – and to be buried. Surrounding Eyüp were waterside palaces with lush gardens, meadows for picnics, and forests where sultans hunted deer. It takes a feat of the imagination to picture all this now, except in Eyüp itself, a place of pilgrimage where you can lose all sense of time in shady, tumbledown cemeteries.

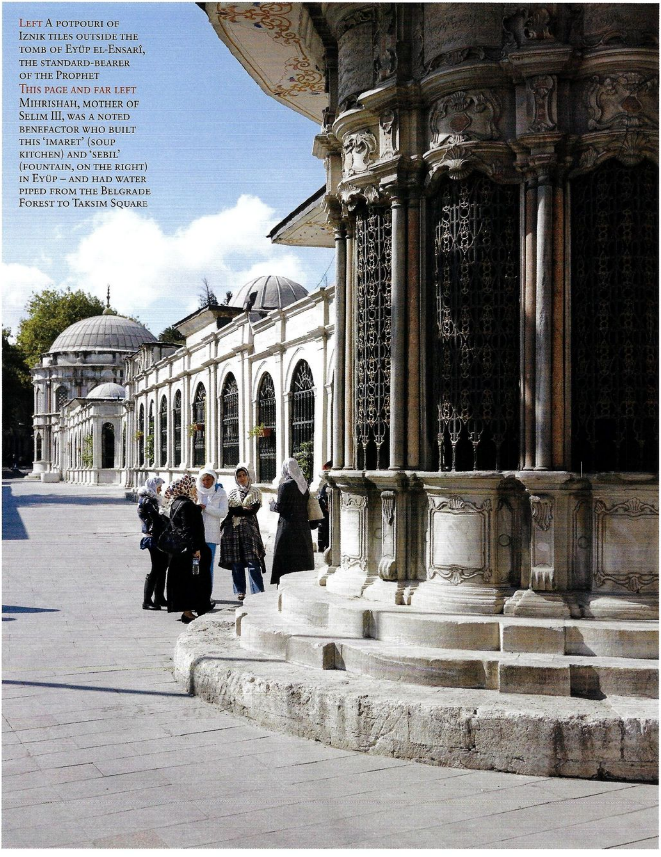
The ferry to the Golden Horn from Üsküdar on the Asian side ends at Eyüp. A new road in front of the old town has spoilt the approach, but cypresses still frame the expansive dome of the **Eyüp Sultan Mosque** mirrored in the calm waters of the inlet. It was here that new sultans were brought by caique to be girt with the sword of Osman in the shady courtyard.

Travellers have always been enchanted by Eyüp, even in the 1970s, when a French abattoir across the water emitted islands of entrails. The mosque stands on the holiest of sites, the grave of Eyüp el-Ensarî (known in Turkey as Eyüp Sultan), the Prophet's standard-bearer, who fell here when the Arabs besieged the Byzantine capital 800 years earlier. (For the story of how this grave was revealed in a vision before Mehmed II's conquest of the capital in 1453, see page 61.)

A path leads through crowded gravestones to the courtyard, where the pious queue below a mad assembly of 16th- and 17th-century Iznik tiles. A city of tombs, medreses and soup



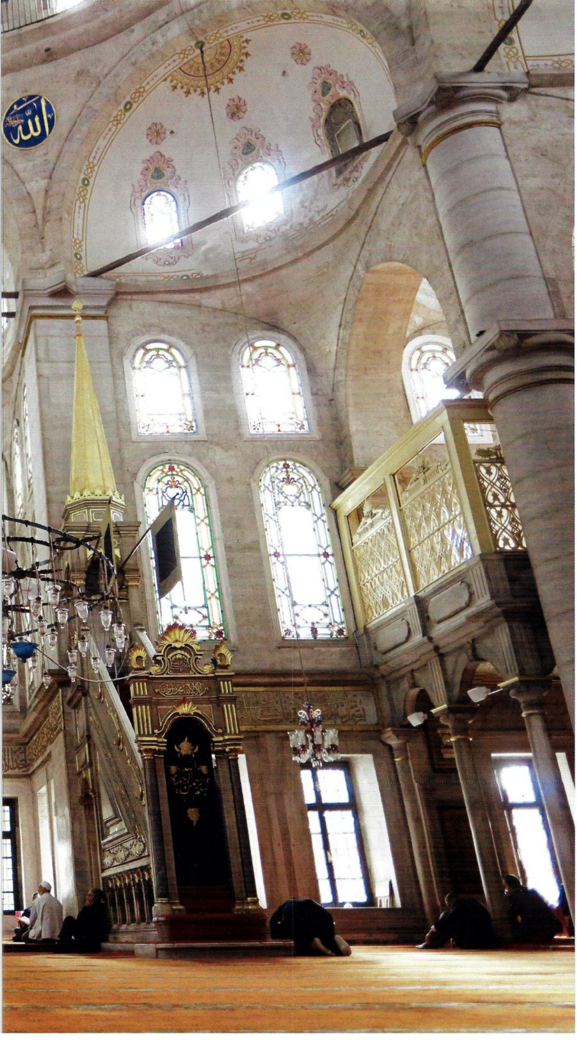




LEFT A POTPOURI OF IZNIK TILES OUTSIDE THE TOMB OF EYÜP EL-ENSARÎ, THE STANDARD-BEARER OF THE PROPHET

THIS PAGE AND FAR LEFT MIHRISHAH, MOTHER OF SELIM III, WAS A NOTED BENEFACTOR WHO BUILT THIS 'IMARET' (SOUP KITCHEN) AND 'SEBIL' (FOUNTAIN, ON THE RIGHT) IN EYÜP – AND HAD WATER PIPED FROM THE BELGRADE FOREST TO TAKSIM SQUARE

JÜRGEN FRANK

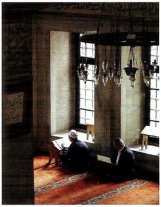


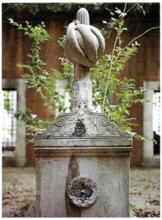
PHOTOGRAPHS: JÜRGEN FRANK

kitchens grew up round Eyüp Sultan's shrine. Most impressive is the foundation of Mihrishah, mother of Selim III, the sultan who rebuilt the mosque in 1798.

Today Eyüp is losing its dusty shadows, but even over-zealous cleaning cannot diminish the beauty of the **Zal Mahmud Pasha Mosque,** still surrounded by greenery, a minor masterpiece Sinan built in 1590 to harmonise with the waterside palaces that once stood here. Set at the foot of a hillside with views of the water, it is framed by an old nursery that has survived the new road along the shore and the district's revamping.

Walk up through the cemetery to the hilltop **Pierre Loti café,** named after the eccentric French author who lived here. It is a modest old wooden house, restored in 1964 by Sabiha Tansuğ, the great ethnographer and the only woman ever to appear on a Turkish coin.



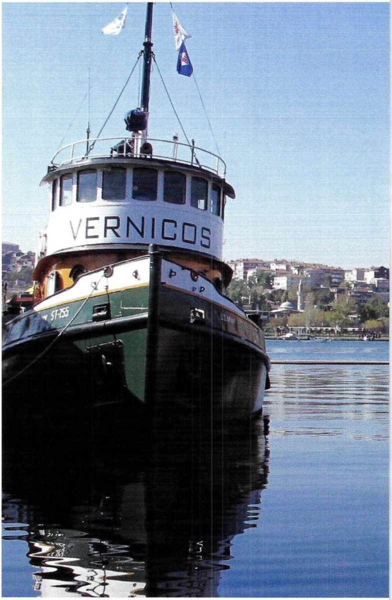


LEFT AND TOP LIGHT FLOODS INTO THE EYÜP SULTAN MOSQUE ABOVE THE GARDENS ARE FULL OF THE TOMBS OF SUFI SHEIKHS

The Rahmi M Koç Museum

TRANSPORTS OF DELIGHT

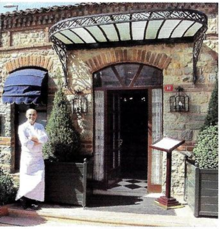
JUST PAST ISTANBUL'S NAVAL DOCKYARDS IS A MUSEUM THAT IS A REAL VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY, FULL OF TRAINS, PLANES, AUTOMOBILES, BOATS… AND RESTAURANTS SERVING DISHES FROM FAR AND WIDE



The upper deck of the Fenerbahçe, a 1952 Glasgow ferryboat moored in front of the Koç Museum, is the place to unwind after the hilltop mosques and shrines of the Golden Horn. In fact, the whole museum is an escape. This is a sprawling playground packed with treasures from the history of transport, from a 1930s railcar, complete with fixtures and fittings, to a Douglas DC-3 Dakota aircraft. The museum is the brainchild of the eminent Turkish industrialist Rahmi M Koç, whose collection is still growing. He recently acquired a unique diplomatic vessel that had clocked up a lot of cruising time along the Bosphorus: the motor launch Hiawatha, built specially in 1932 for the use of the American embassy (see page 100).

The museum itself has a history connected to transport: it was used in Ottoman times as a foundry for anchors. There is a wealth of other unique treasures to see, big and small, including the railway carriage used by Sultan Abdülaziz, Turkey's first mass-produced car, the fibreglass Anadol, and the chronometer used by the explorer Henry Morton Stanley, of "Dr Livingstone, I presume?" fame.

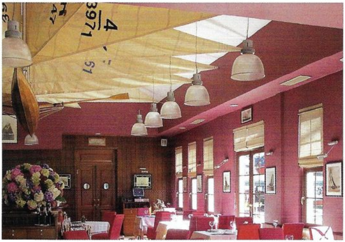
The Koç Museum is also a place where you will never go hungry: among the eateries and watering holes here is a French brasserie, the Café du Levant, where you can order onion soup and foie gras, and the Halat restaurant, serving tasty Mediterranean food.



Rahmi M Koç Museum, Hasköy, Istanbul. Open Tuesday–Friday 10am–5pm, weekends 10am–7pm. Museum and restaurants closed Mondays. +90 212 369 6600. Visit www.rmk-museum.org.tr

ABOVE RIGHT VINTAGE BOATS FROM THE MUSEUM'S FLOTILLA
ABOVE LEFT THE LONG VIEW FROM THE FENERBAHÇE FERRY
LEFT AYDIN DEMİR, CHEF AT THE CAFÉ DU LEVANT
RIGHT A DOUGLAS DC-3 DAKOTA
CENTRE THE HALAT SERVES MEDITERRANEAN FOOD
FAR RIGHT THE 1965 FIBREGLASS ANADOL A1 AND ONE OF THE LAST 'TAKA', BLACK SEA WOODEN CARGO BOATS

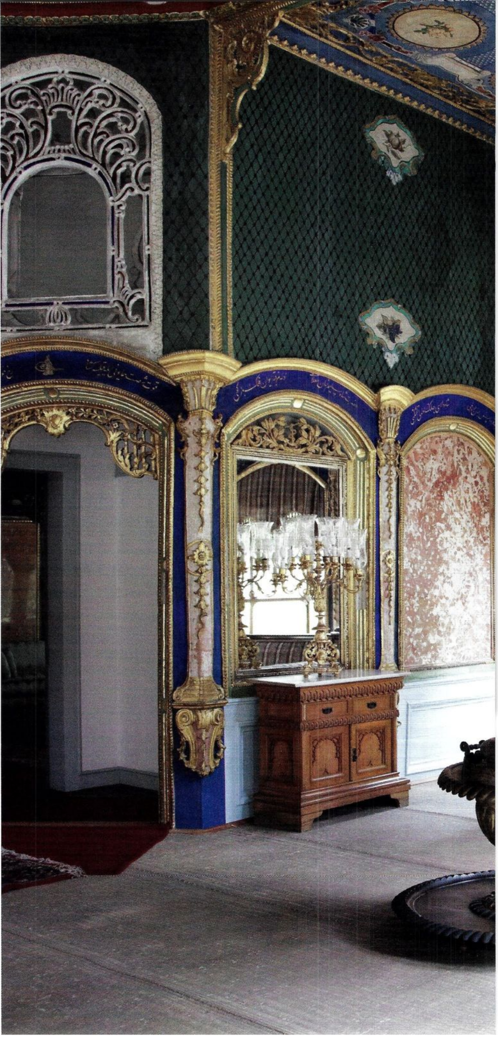
BERRIN TOROLSAN



Aynalıkavak Kasrı

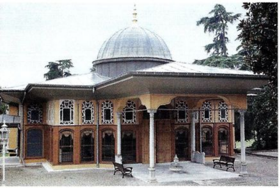
THE MIRRORED PAVILION

HIDDEN IN AN ABANDONED INDUSTRIAL WASTELAND ON THE GOLDEN HORN IS THE AYNALIKAVAK KASRI, A GEM OF THE 18TH-CENTURY TULIP PERIOD. PHOTOGRAPHS BY FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG

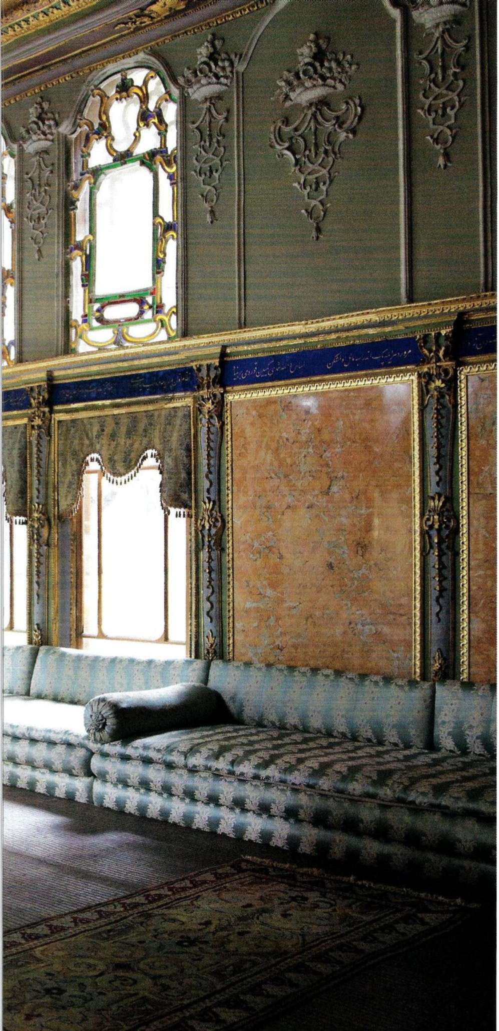


Warehouses, dry docks and the beating of hammers are what the northern side of the Golden Horn was all about from the time Mehmed the Conqueror ordered dockyards to be built at Kasımpaşa in 1457. In the 19th century, the shore became one giant naval shipyard. So it is something of a miracle that up on the hill where Mehmed planted 12,000 cypress trees, beyond the old cemeteries, hidden away in one of Istanbul's least prepossessing neighbourhoods, is a walled garden surrounding a dream of a kiosk – a favourite of many sultans.

Aynalıkavak was conceived as an imperial pleasure palace, and has been associated with happy times in the lives of successive sultans. A historian once ranked it fourth in the rollcall of Ottoman palaces, but today few visitors call at Aynalıkavak Kasrı,



BUILT IN THE EARLY 1700S, AYNALIKAVAK IS TYPICAL OF THE TULIP PERIOD'S WESTERN INFLUENCES. THE SPLENDID AUDIENCE CHAMBER (RIGHT) WAS REDECORATED IN THE 1790S BY SELIM III, WHOSE TUĞRA IS ABOVE THE DOOR. HE KEPT THE LOW WINDOWS AND ALCOVES, BUT ADDED THE GILDED BAROQUE FLOURISHES



literally the Pavilion of the Mirrored Poplar, as the kiosk is known. Thirty-foot walls separate it from the now abandoned naval docks and a scruffy neighbourhood of apartments and workshops. But in 2011, after decades under restoration, it was unlocked. Its garden is a little more kempt, if less romantic, than of old. Gone are the wilderness and the nesting woodcock that would fly out in alarm if anyone approached.

The pavilion is a good reason to hop off the boat at Hasköy, next to the Koç Museum with its quietly smart restaurants (the other reason to venture here). You could walk from the boat station, but taxis and the Hasköy–Kasımpaşa *dolmuş* ply the route at speed, and it is just a 10-minute cab ride from Beyoğlu.

The late English garden historian John Drake was passionate about the palace. The Getty-funded report he helped to produce wrote of the vineyards and gardens of the Byzantine emperors, of Mehmed the Conqueror's shipyard, and of how the hillside leading up to the Okmeydan, the famous archery ground, became "the Shipyard Imperial Gardens" when Mehmed ordered the creation of a series of kiosks and embellishments. Annexes, courtyards, halls, hamams and fountains continued to be added along the shore until it must have looked strikingly similar to the Topkapı Palace.

At the start of the 17th century, Ahmed I, builder of the Blue Mosque – who enjoyed ensconcing himself with his manuscripts in a prettily tiled pavilion in the Topkapı with a grand view up the Golden Horn – asked for a kiosk to be readied here, as he liked to pass this way on his walk to Eyüp. In 1614 he ordered a flower garden to be created. His viziers made him gifts of rare bulbs.

In 1647 Sultan Ibrahim, who became a little too attached to his harem, had the high harem walls pulled down for a better view of the Golden Horn and decreed that no boats should pass – a law that was overturned within a week as impracticable. His son Mehmed IV, "the Hunter", who was not easily tempted back to Istanbul, spent two years rebuilding the palace after a narrow escape from fire in 1677, when he took refuge first in the large glass kiosk, and then in a kiosk on the shore. He held three days of festivities there in 1679 when he returned from his Polish campaign.

The 18th century was Aynalıkavak's heyday, beginning in the Tulip Period, when the Ottomans discovered the exotic West. Countless pavilions sprang up all along the Golden Horn, as far as Kağıthane – the Sweet Waters of Europe – at the top. Manners became more extroverted and religious segregation less rigid. The

THE COMPOSITION ROOM WITH ITS CLASSIC DIVANS. SELIM III WAS DEEPLY MUSICAL AND SHUT HIMSELF AWAY FOR MONTHS IN THE PALACE, THEN A COMPLEX OF MANY KIOSKS most celebrated use of the palace came in 1720, with the 15-day festivities for the circumcision of Ahmed III's four sons. In miniatures recording the event by Levni, the sultan is seen watching the water sports from a kiosk built on stilts over the water. Against a poplar behind him is a gilded mirror with the word "Aynalıkavak" painted on it. This is presumed to be one of the Murano mirrors "as tall as poplars" that the Venetians had sent the sultan as gifts for the palace two years earlier, after the Treaty of Passarowitz.

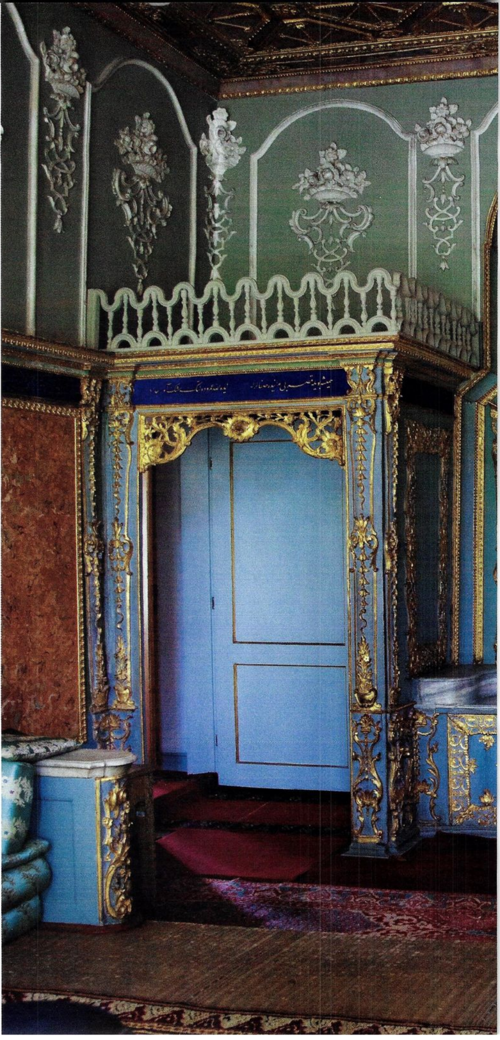
Today's pavilion, like the kiosk in the miniature, has a façade with three bays and probably dates from Ahmed III's reign. The plan is thought to have remained essentially unaltered since then.

At the end of the 18th century, Selim III is known to have grown so fond of the place that he shut himself away there for three months one summer, composing his music. This was the golden age of Ottoman music, and Selim was one of its most accomplished exponents and patrons. Unprecedentedly, he would rise to greet his *tambur* teacher when he entered the room. He was an exceptional composer, many of whose works are still performed, and it was during his reign that the Western viola d'amore was brought in to accompany the traditional *tambur* and *ney*.

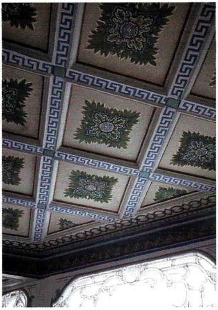
The pavilion's decoration dates mainly from Selim III's reign, though the entwined roses in the entrance hall at the side are probably earlier. This hall led to both the harem, built over two storeys (allowed for by the garden's seaward slope), and the *selamlık*, a suite of two reception rooms, the Audience Chamber and the Composition Room. These are the jewels of the pavilion, a delightful synthesis of Ottoman and Western taste.

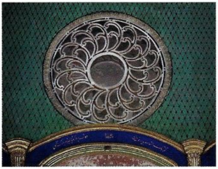
Poetry written in delicate *ta'liq* calligraphy, gold leaf on indigo, runs around both rooms, over the doors and mirrors and below the upper windows. Verses in the Composition Room pay tribute to Selim. Panels of fine Venetian-style faux marble are separated by columns covered in Baroque gilding. The crescent-and-star emblem, officially adopted as the Ottoman state symbol by Mustafa III (1757–74), also makes its appearance here.

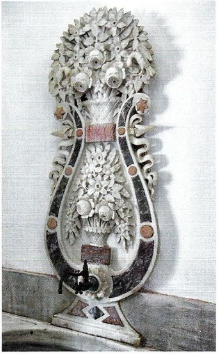
Of the three gates providing access to the garden, the one leading to the shipyard is the most remarkable, a sort of neo-Byzantine concoction bearing the *tuğra* of Selim III, who must have established the limits of Aynalıkavak, the sole surviving pavilion of this palace of pleasures.

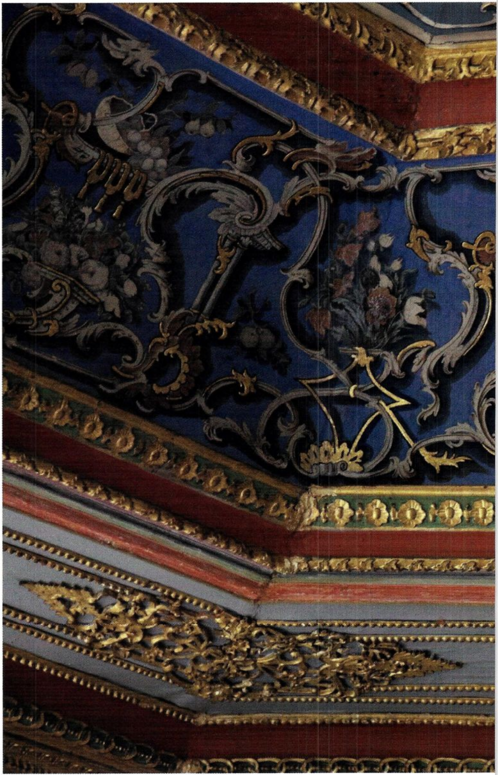


The Composition Room Over the door and running around the room is Şeyh Galip's poem to Selim, inscribed by Mehmed Esad Yesarî. The calligrapher had fought paralysis of his right side and involuntary movements of his left arm to become the finest master of 'ta'liq' script. A coat of arms in a more typically Empire vein was added by Selim's successor Mahmud II

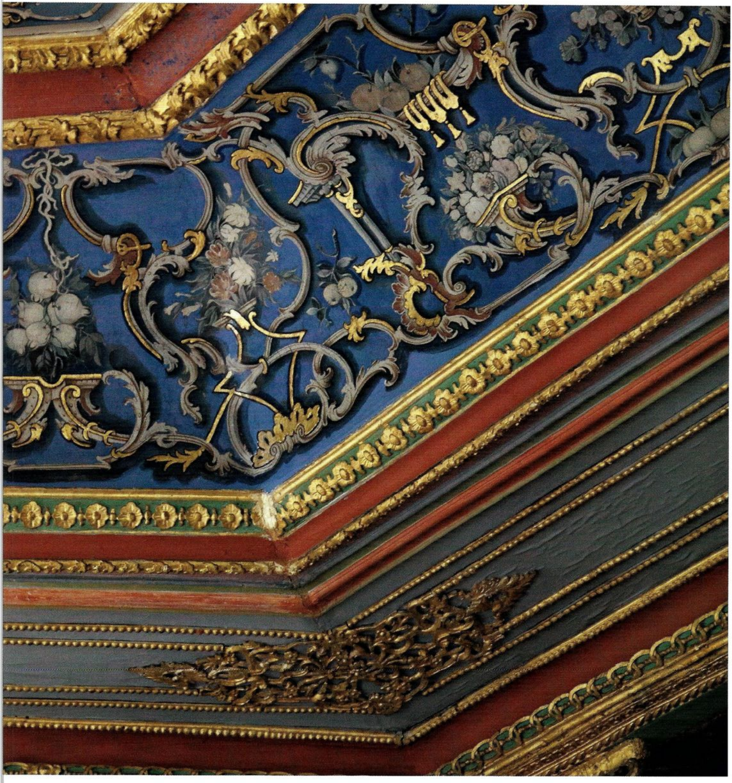








AYNALIKAVAK'S ECLECTIC INTERIOR DECORATION SOMETIMES EXPLODES INTO A RIOT OF BAROQUE
ABOVE AND LEFT THE PAINTED FOLIAGE ON THE CEILING OF THE COMPOSITION ROOM IS ECHOED IN AN EXQUISITE FLORAL FOUNTAIN CARVED FROM DIFFERENT-COLOURED MARBLES.
TOP LEFT THE COFFERED CEILING IN THE HAREM IS DISTINCTLY VENETIAN IN STYLE
CENTRE LEFT THE CIRCULAR WINDOW IN THE AUDIENCE CHAMBER IS CLOSER TO A GOTHIC



ROSE WINDOW THAN ANYTHING OTTOMAN. THE ASSIMILATION OF WESTERN ELEMENTS INTO A TRADITIONAL OTTOMAN REPERTOIRE PARALLELS THE APPEARANCE OF THE VIOLA D'AMORE, OR 'SÎNEKEMAN', AT SELIM'S COURT

Aynalıkavak Kasrı is open 9am–5pm; closed Monday and Thursday. +90 212 227 3441; www.millisaraylar.gov.tr. A music museum in the harem wing includes a collection of instruments donated by a descendant of the Ottoman dynasty

The Land Walls

A LAST DEFENCE

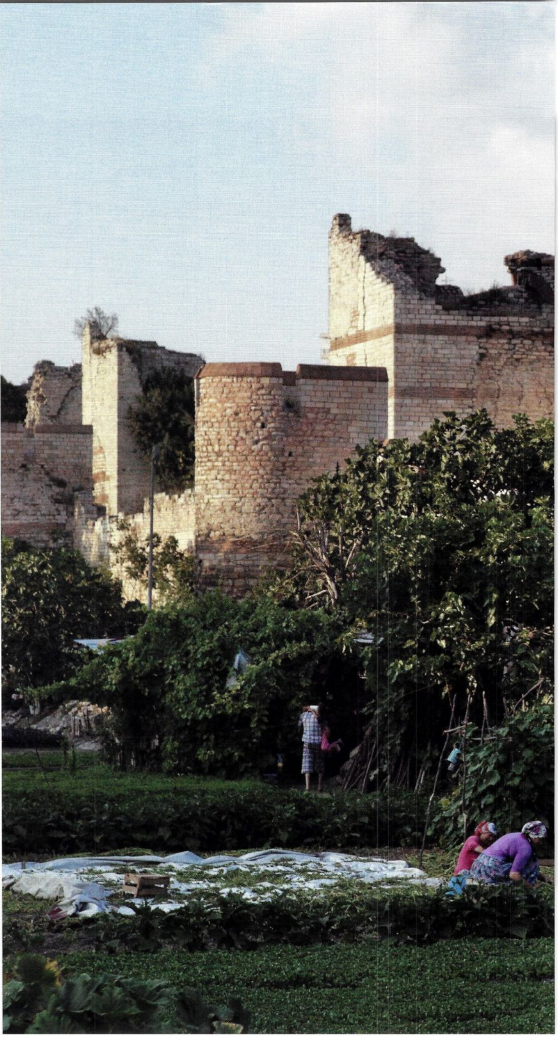
ROBERT OUSTERHOUT FEARS FOR THE FUTURE OF ISTANBUL'S ANCIENT LAND WALLS

Once the greatest fortification system of antiquity, the Land Walls become less historic by the year as new urban projects take their toll. Dedicated by Theodosius II in 412–13, they actually consist of three parallel lines of defence: a high wall, a low wall and a moat. An enthusiastic, if heavy-handed, restoration around the Belgrade Gate gives a sense of their original form – and, indeed, if the city ever comes under siege again it will be well protected. Further south, something of the picturesque decrepitude remains.

Closely examined, the walls are an indicator of the city's changing fortunes, with repairs marked by inscriptions, from a major reconstruction after the great 717 earthquake to repairs on the eve of the Ottoman conquest in 1453.

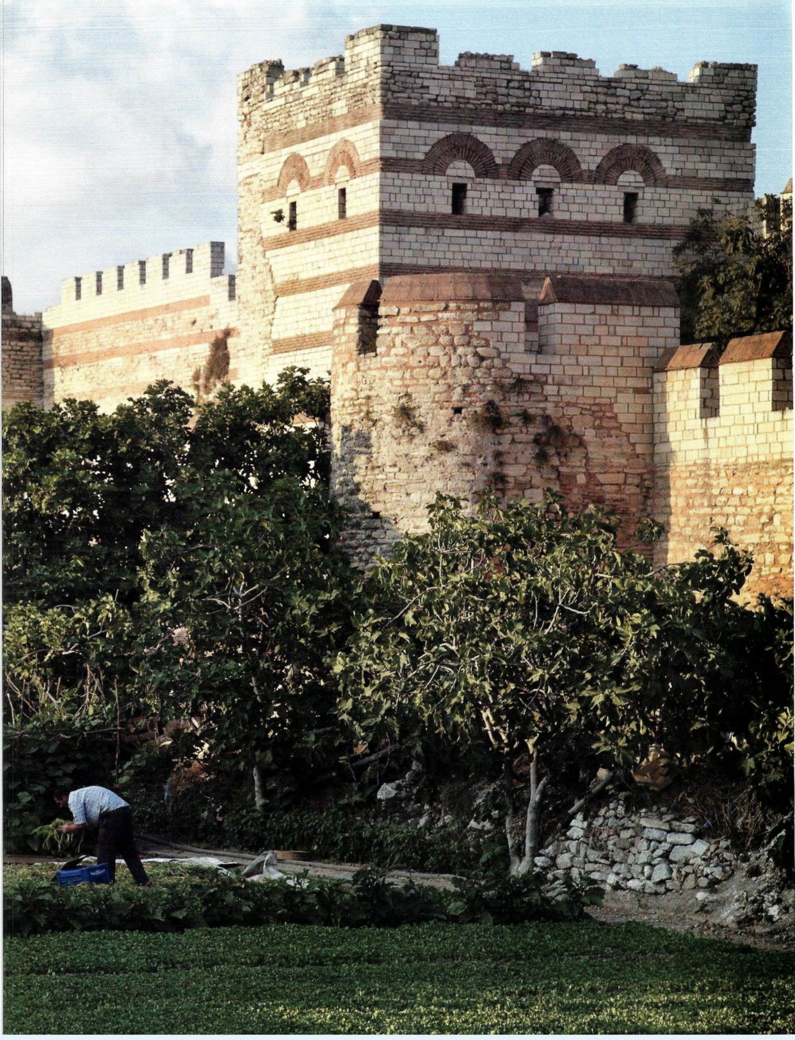
But the walls were not only defensive. The Theodosian Code allowed farmers to use the lower rooms of the towers for storage in peacetime. In fact, throughout the city's history the walls were enveloped by farmsteads. In the 1650s the Ottomans tapped into an underground river and were soon growing giant lettuces and artichokes – the wells, some 20 metres deep, are still in use.

Alluvial deposits in the dry moat make for good gardening. Sadly, the Ottoman *bostans* (market gardens), regarded as part of Istanbul's "intangible cultural heritage" (UNESCO's official term), are now under threat from wrong-headed development.



GARDENERS GATHER A RICH CROP OF PURSLANE UNDER THE 5TH-CENTURY LAND WALLS. THE BEDS ARE AS HISTORIC AS THE WALLS

FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG



BYZANTIUM'S LEGACY

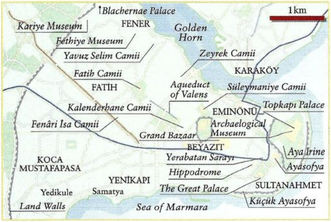
Byzantine Istanbul is elusive; much of its past lies buried. But, says Robert Ousterhout, the visitor can piece together a vivid if impressionistic picture of the city by exploring its glorious surviving churches, its monasteries and monuments, and by examining its wealth of archaeological treasures. Photographs by Fritz von der Schulenburg

A PATCHWORK PARADISE

While Istanbul has witnessed all sorts of salvage archaeology in the past century, there has been virtually no urban archaeology – that is, rigorous excavation to determine the basic features of the city, such as the street system, public spaces and housing, all of which remain poorly understood. Our view of the Byzantine city is consequently limited to discrete churches devoid of context, which present at best a distilled essence of the city's historic greatness. For most of us, Constantinople seems more a concept than a reality. We have lots of isolated monuments, and even more broken bits, but we lack the big picture – so in a form of synecdoche, we know the city through its parts.

How then to envisage the big picture of Constantinople? Start with the churches. Nothing can replace the experience of **Ayasofya's (Haghia Sophia's)** immense spaciousness (page 148) or the intimate, jewellery-box quality of the **Church of the Chora** (which became the **Kariye Camii** and is now a museum, page 154). These two churches represent the yin and yang of Byzantine art and architecture. In spite of the ups and downs of scaffolding (finally down last year, up again this year), Ayasofya remains justifiably the most popular museum in the city, and an engineering achievement without rival.

In contrast, the Kariye is as intimate as the Ayasofya is grand. Its mosaics and frescoes still enchant with their odd combination of intellectual rigour and aesthetic refinement. Few images can rival the dramatic Angel of the Lord Rolling up the Scroll of Heaven at the End of Time in the funerary chapel.



SUSANNA HICKLING

But don't stop there – visit some of the B-list churches as well, all of which survived as mosques. Ayasofya's immediate predecessor, the church of **Sts Sergius and Bacchus**, now **Küçük** (Little) **Ayasofya** (page 160), is as spatially sophisticated as its namesake, with a dome half its diameter. Although it preserves no mosaics, its architectural sculpture is stunning, its geometry complex. Similarly, the funerary chapel at the monastery of the **Theotokos Pammakaristos (Fethiye Camii**, page 168) is the immediate predecessor of the Kariye's, with colourful brick and stone ornamentation on its exterior and animated mosaics in its diminutive interior. Much is missing, but the visages of craggy, bearded monks crowded into the corners make it worth the visit. Painstakingly excavated from 1966 to 1978, the **Theotokos Kyriotissa (Kalenderhane Camii**, page 164) preserves a fine array of marbles in its spacious interior.

Famous images from the 14th-century Church of the Chora opposite The Scroll of Heaven Above The Deesis

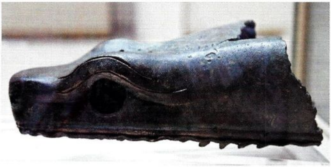
Not interested in churches? Recent research on the water system has shed new light on daily life in Constantinople. While less glamorous than a decorated church, the arcaded **Aqueduct of Valens** – after the Roman Emperor Valens – is impressive, representing a fraction of the 592-kilometre system of channels that brought water into the city (page 84). Once inside the walls, water was stored in dozens of cisterns, many built into the substructures of major buildings. The **Basilica Cistern (Yerebatan Sarayı**, page 66), across the street from Ayasofya, once supported the courts of law, now vanished. Tourists stare at the forest of damp, drippy, mismatched columns and ponder how the marble head of Medusa came to be stuck upside down in a far corner, but none of this was ever here for show; the marbles are simply remnants of the monumental public buildings upstairs.

The other introductory synecdoche I recommend is the excellent *Istanbul Through the Ages* display in the **Archaeological Museum**. Try this approach: first examine the evocative broken bits on show, paying close attention to the information on the wall labels, then track down the findspot. Let the art lead you into the city.

ΤΟΥ ΧΥ ΠΑΡΟΥΣΙΑ
ΗΔΕΥΤΕΡΑ
ΟΣΟΣΙΩΝ

A HISTORY OF BYZANTIUM
IN TEN OBJECTS

THE 'ISTANBUL THROUGH THE AGES' GALLERY AT THE CITY'S ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OFFERS MANY TANTALISING CLUES TO A VANISHED CONSTANTINOPLE. ROBERT OUSTERHOUT SELECTS TEN EMOTIVE ARTEFACTS THAT TAKE THE TIME TRAVELLER ON A JOURNEY BACK TO THE BYZANTINE WORLD



A HEAD FROM THE SERPENT COLUMN

△ Either it was decapitated by a drunken Polish nobleman in 1700, or it simply fell apart from old age. Whatever the truth, the evocative Serpent Column survives, headless, as a miserable brazen stub in a pit in the Hippodrome. Gaspare Fossati found this head in the 1840s when restoring Ayasofya.

The once-gilded bronze column originally stood before the Temple of Apollo at Delphi and consisted of three intertwined serpents supporting a tripod commemorating the victory of the (rational) Greeks over the (irrational) Persians in 479BC. It was brought by Constantine to decorate his new capital and placed on the *spina* of the Hippodrome. With the advent of modern tourism, it became one of the city's most popular monuments. Viewed against the backdrop of the declining Ottoman Empire and the mysterious East, the rich and meaningful history of the column had a particular resonance for the rational, civilised European visitor schooled in the Classics.

In spite of overzealous repaving, a stroll through the Hippodrome is a must. Avoid early morning when the area is overwhelmed by tour groups just off the cruise ships, pursued by earnest touts hocking outdated guidebooks. I prefer early evening's crepuscular light, after the crowds have thinned. The softened illumination also brings out the nuances in the sculpted base of the Egyptian Obelisk.

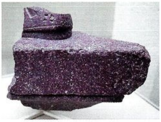
A TETRARCH'S SEVERED FOOT

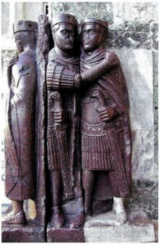
▽▽ The modest piece below has, in the words of Mae West, "been things and seen places". It was found in the excavations around the Myrelaion (Bodrum Camii), near Beyazıt Square, in 1965 and quickly recognised as the missing left foot from the porphyry statue group of the Tetrarchs (believed to be Diocletian, Maximian, Galerius and Constantius Chlorus, from the late third century) which now decorates the façade of the Treasury of San Marco in Venice. The group probably originated in Egypt, the source of the purple stone, and may have been part of the imported sculpture with which Constantine decorated his new capital.

Arranged in couples and attached to columns, the figures embrace in filial harmony and undoubtedly stood in the square known as the Philadelphion (Brotherly Love). All traces of the square have vanished, but it must have been somewhere near the Laleli Mosque. By the eighth century, the statues were assumed to be Constantine and his sons.

After the Latin Conquest of 1204, they were carried away as booty (minus a boot) by the Venetians, and their provenance was forgotten. A useful footnote to history, as it were, the missing foot proves they came from Constantinople.

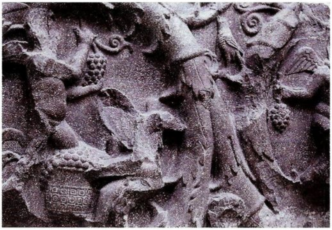
Turning south off the main drag in front of the Laleli Mosque will lead you to the great podium of the early-tenth-century Myrelaion Palace, for which the Bodrum Mosque once served as the private family chapel of Romanus I Lecapenus. The palace itself has disappeared, but its vaulted substructures are worth a visit – it is now a shopping bazaar.

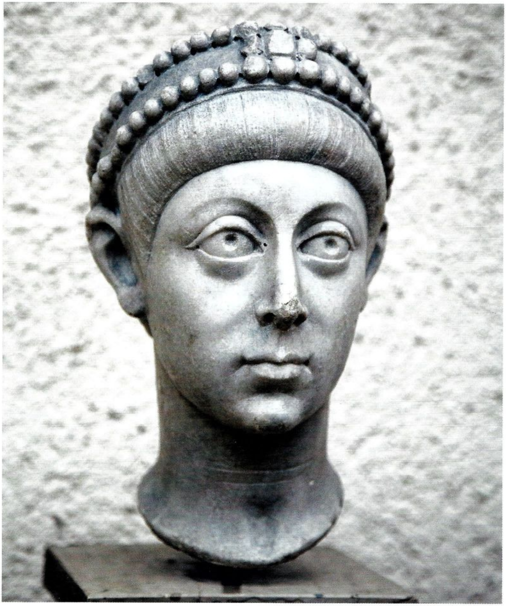




FROM THE COFFIN OF CONSTANTINE?

▽ Who was buried in Constantine's mausoleum at the Church of the Holy Apostles? Almost everyone, it seems – at least, all early Byzantine emperors. Thus any attempt





(and there have been several) to identify individuals in the line-up of imperial porphyry sarcophagi in front of the Archaeological Museum is an exercise in futility. I like to think the sarcophagus in the atrium of Aya Irini is that of Constantine, but this fragment in the *Istanbul Through the Ages* gallery is just as likely to be his. By the stone, it may be identified as imperial – only emperors had purple stone coffins – and the complex details are identical to Constantine's elder daughter Constantina's sarcophagus, still preserved in Rome. Framed by the arabesques of a vine scroll, chubby little *putti* gather grapes to make wine. The sarcophagus must have belonged to either Constantine or a member of his family, and it unquestionably stood within Constantine's mausoleum.

A stroll around Mehmed the Conqueror's Fatih Mosque today, where the Church of the Holy Apostles stood, at the highest point within the city walls, will reveal few traces of Byzantium, but it does give a sense of the site's commanding presence. In the late 12th century, the poet Nicholas Mesarites climbed to the roof and described the dramatic view, which included fields of wheat growing inside the city walls. Constantine's mausoleum has vanished without a trace, but Fatih Mehmed's is still there, at least as it was rebuilt in the 18th century.

AN EMPEROR'S HELMET HAIRSTYLE

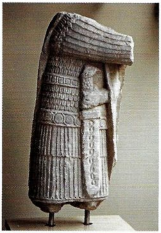
△ Usually identified as the Emperor Arcadius, who ruled 377–408, this elegant portrait head was found in the Beyazıt neighbourhood. No doubt it once had a body to go with it. The helmet-like hairstyle, large eyes and simplified features all suggest a date in the late fourth or early fifth century, so Arcadius is as good a guess as any. The statue probably once decorated the forum built by Arcadius's father, Theodosius I.

Portions of the Forum of Theodosius still survive along the Divan Yolu, in front of the Faculty of Literature of Istanbul University. Most impressive are the remains of a triumphal arch, formed by marble columns decorated with an oak-whorl pattern and grasped by giant hands, like the club of Hercules – perhaps to suggest the power of the emperor.

TELLTALE ATTIRE

▽ Found in the excavations at the Golden Gate, on the Theodosian Land Walls, in 1927, along with a variety of reused ancient pieces, this imperial figure has received remarkably little attention. Representing a Tetrarchic ruler of the late third or early fourth century, it is almost identical to its *confrères* in Venice (opposite), down to the filial embrace, the military costume and eagle-headed dagger.

The statue came from the Golden Gate's outer gateway. In 965 the Emperor Nicephorus Phocas celebrated his victories against the Arabs in Cilicia with a proper Roman triumph, entering the city by the Golden Gate and following the traditional ceremonial route of old. Among the booty he brought back with him were the



bronze gates of Mopsuestia, which he installed at the Golden Gate, and the sculptures may have been added to the outer wall at that time.

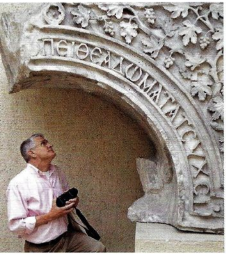
Subsequently incorporated in the Ottoman fortress of Yedikule in 1458, the Golden Gate nevertheless preserves traces of its long Byzantine history. Honouring either Theodosius I or II, it was constructed immediately before or contemporaneously with the Land Walls. It continued to function for occasional triumphal entries, but its defensive function was gradually given precedence, as is evident in the reduction and blocking of the passageways.

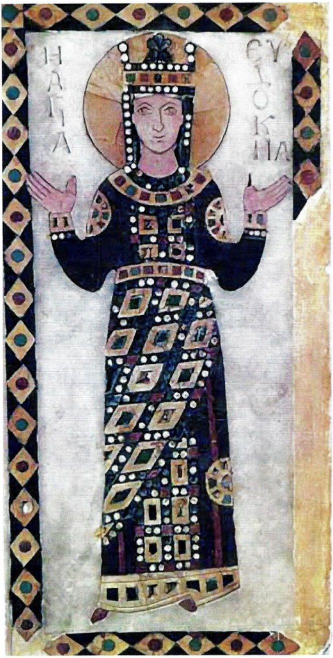
Today one enters the city by way of a human-scale door – tiny by comparison – rather than through a grand archway. Heavily and unsympathetically restored in recent decades, the Land Walls around the Golden Gate appear ready to withstand the next siege of the city. Farther to the north, however, they preserve something of their romantic character.

PRAISE FOR A WISE WOMAN

▽ Rarely has an excavated monument been identified as quickly as the Church of St Polyeuktos, built by Juliana Anicia (462–528), Emperor Justinian's great rival. When parts of an inscription on marble blocks were found in 1960, during the excavation for the foundations of the city hall at Saraçhane, it was discovered that the words corresponded to a poem preserved in a tenth-century manuscript, labelled "In the naos of St Polyeuktos". More pieces turned up four years later, when a new traffic interchange was under construction, and an excavation swiftly followed. The hyperbolic dedicatory poem, which claimed Juliana had "surpassed the wisdom of the celebrated Solomon", surrounded the nave of the largest and most lavish church built before Ayasofya. Framed by grapevines, the inscription surmounted niches formed by the unfurled tails of peacocks (which I'm looking at in this picture). Ostentatious in the extreme, the church had columns inlaid with glass paste to resemble jewels, one of which is on display at the museum.

Out of style and out of favour, the church had fallen into ruin by the 13th century. Some of its marbles are in Venice; others have made it as far as Barcelona. Only the foundations survive. The site is now a large archaeological park.





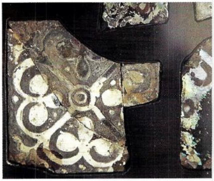
AN ICON OF FASHION

◁ Found in the 1929 excavations of the Fenâri İsa Mosque (the former Monastery of the Theotokos of Lips), this early-tenth-century icon is executed in the rare technique of *opus sectile*, or inlaid marble mosaic. Dressed in the splendid garb of an empress, the figure is identified by the inscription as St Eudokia. But which one? The name, meaning "goodwill", was common for Byzantine empresses. Usually presumed to be the pious wife of Theodosius II (408–450), she may in fact be the little-known third wife of the Emperor Leo VI, the Wise (886–912), who had the habit of canonising his ex-wives. The fact that the marble icon was found on the roof suggests it once decorated one of the tiny rooftop oratories of the monastic church.

Expanded to be the burial place of the Palaiologan imperial family in the late 13th century, the church complex on Vatan Caddesi in Fatih has long since functioned as a mosque. Nevertheless, it still preserves elaborate architectural sculptures in the "oriental" style of the early tenth century, and a lavish east façade with decorative brick patterning of the late 13th century.

THE GLORY OF GLASS

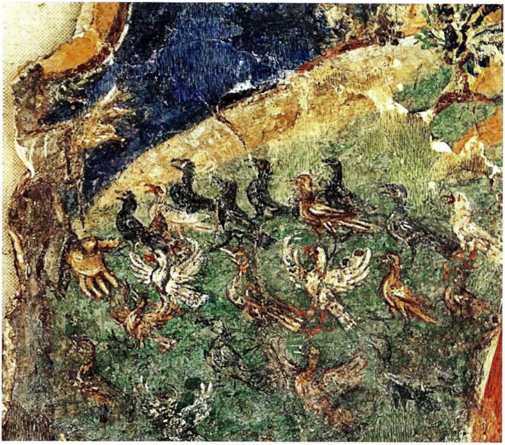
▽ Excavators were astonished when, in 1958, hundreds of fragments of stained glass were found in the Zeyrek Mosque, in what was once the south church of the Monastery of Christ Pantokrator, built

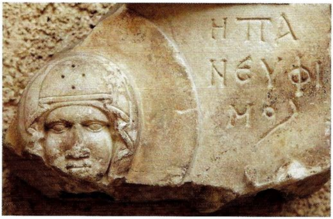


between 1118 and 1136. It can be deduced from where they were found that they came from the tall east windows.

A signature element of western European Gothic architecture, what was stained glass doing in Constantinople? Evidence of the Komnenian emperor's fascination with the exotic West, the windows contained both figures – note the eyeball and drapery patterns among the displayed fragments – and inscriptions. Chemical analysis indicates that although the technology comes from western Europe the glass was produced locally.

The glass formed one part of an ostentatious interior, originally decorated with marble revetments, mosaics, an *opus sectile* floor, gilded sculpture and enamelwork. One is reminded of the words of the ninth-century Patriarch Photios, who complained about a similar church: "In one respect only do I consider the architect of the church to have erred, namely by gathering into one and the same spot all kinds of beauty he does not allow the spectator to enjoy the sight in its purity, since the latter is carried and pulled away from one thing by another, and is unable to satiate himself with the spectacle as much as he may desire."





A MARTYR IN MARBLE

▷ Found in the excavations of her church by the Hippodrome, this late-13th-century marble icon provides St Euphemia with the epithet *hepa neuphimos* (To the Highly Acclaimed), a play on her name (from the Greek "well reputed"). To emphasise her sanctity, she is represented with the features of the Virgin Mary.

Euphemia was a rare local saint whose original sanctuary had been in Chalcedon (today's Kadıköy, on the Asian shore of the Bosphorus), but her relics were transferred to a more central location in the early seventh century. After the Latin Occupation of the 13th century her church was refurbished with new paintings and sculpture to assert the city's sanctity and Orthodoxy.

Today the pitiful remnants of her church may be seen behind an iron fence. The site has most recently served as a parking lot for the former Law Courts, but permission has now been granted for its restoration. The church, featuring the late-13th-century frescoes of Euphemia's martyrdom, should be open to visitors within a year, accessible from the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts. Remarkably, Euphemia's relics survived the fury of the Iconoclasts and the rapacity of the Crusaders. They are still here in the city, enshrined at the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate on the Golden Horn (page 107), in a silver sarcophagus in the south aisle of the Church of St George. By their presence they serve as a fitting testimonial to the continuity of tradition in contemporary Istanbul.

FLYING IN THE CHAPEL: FRESCOES OF ST FRANCIS

△ Perhaps the most significant vestige of the Latin Occupation of Constantinople (1204–61), frescoes depicting the life of St Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of animals, were uncovered in 1967 in a chapel of the Theotokos Kyriotissa (Kalenderhane Camii).

Francis died in 1226 and was canonised in 1228 by Pope Gregory IX. The frescoes represent one of the earliest cycles of his life, painted by an artist from Acre around 1250. Although the face of Francis is damaged, the depiction of him preaching to a lively flock of birds is particularly compelling.

The building itself represents the last major Byzantine construction before the arrival of the Latins in 1204. Carefully restored after its excavation in 1966–78, the spacious interior preserves significant portions of its marble revetments and is well worth a visit.

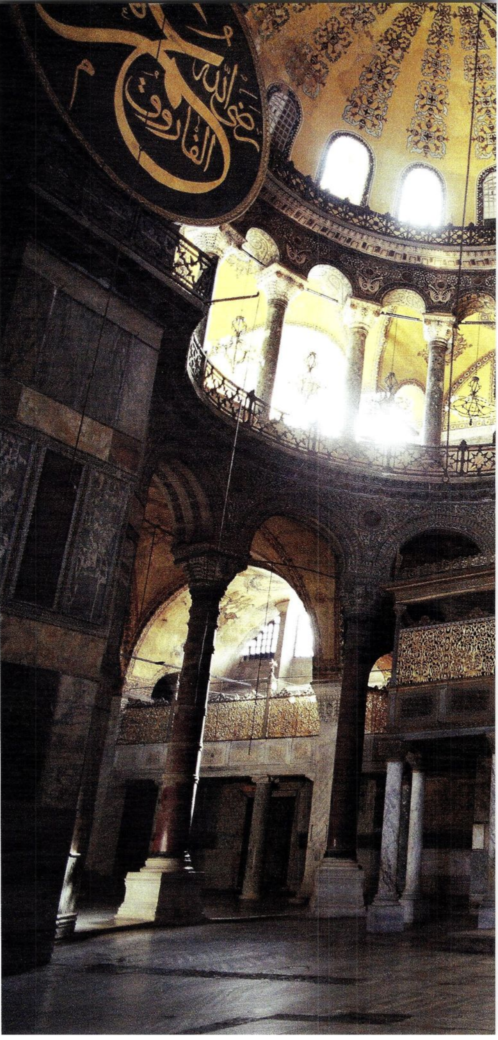
Ayasofya

Terrifying beauty

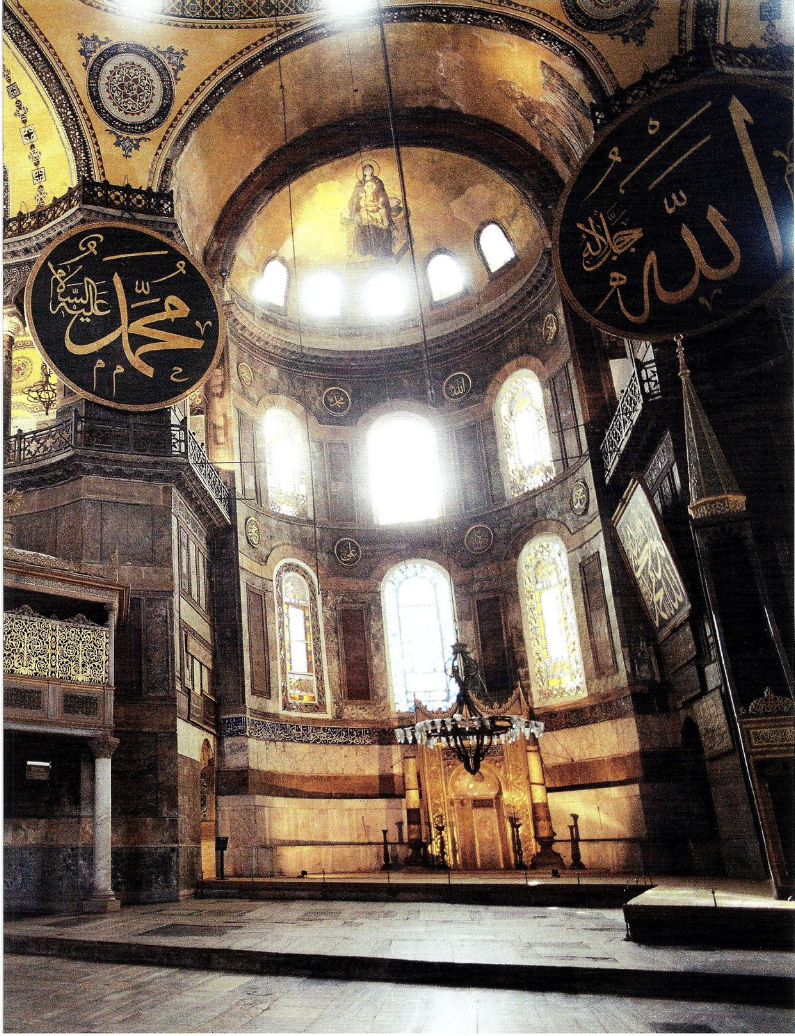
JUSTINIAN'S SOARING EDIFICE INSPIRES THE SAME AWE TODAY AS IT DID IN VISITORS A MILLENNIUM AGO WHO WONDERED IF THIS WERE HEAVEN OR EARTH. SETTING OUT ON A TOUR OF THE CITY'S BEST-PRESERVED BYZANTINE CHURCHES, ROBERT OUSTERHOUT STILL SENSES AN AIR OF THE MIRACULOUS IN AYASOFYA

What did historic visitors expect to see when they entered Haghia Sophia, or Ayasofya as it is now known? Many arrived anticipating the miraculous. Like the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, Haghia Sophia – the Church of the Holy Wisdom – has been a *thauma* (wonder) and a *theama* (must-see) since its inception. As the Russian ambassadors recounted following their visit in the tenth century, "We knew not if we were in Heaven or on Earth. We only know that God dwells there among men."

For the Byzantine beholder, Justinian's Great Church seemed almost beyond human comprehension. Following its completion in AD 537, Justinian's biographer Procopius (c500–c565) breathlessly described it as "wonderful in its beauty yet altogether terrifying by the apparent precariousness of its composition. For it seems somehow not to be raised up in a firm manner, but to soar



ABOVE AYASOFYA WITH ITS ADDED MINARETS
RIGHT THE 6TH-CENTURY BASILICA'S SUBLIME INTERIOR. THE CHURCH BECAME A MOSQUE IN 1453 AND A MUSEUM IN 1935. THE GIANT MEDALLIONS ARE 19TH-CENTURY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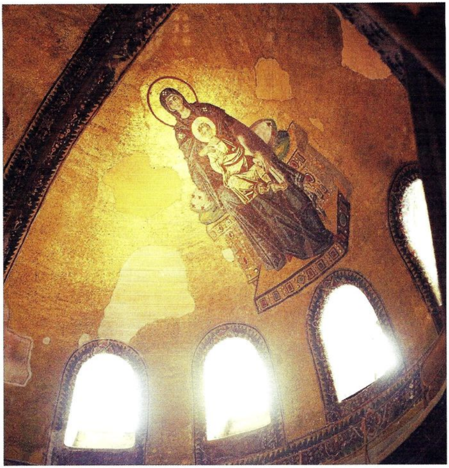


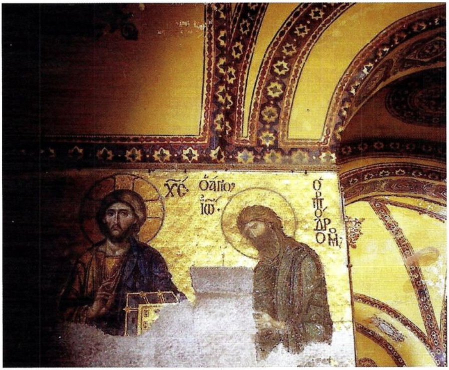
aloft to the peril of those who are inside."

In their design for the unique building, the architects Anthemius and Isidorus had consciously emphasised the transcendental, so that the structural elements lose the appearance of support: the solidity of the piers vanishes behind lavish coverings; colonnades become mere decorative screens. Even the carved marble details seem dematerialised: with their delicate, lace-like surfaces, the capitals appear unable to support anything of substance.

The sense of weightlessness, despite the great mass of the building, led Procopius to conclude that the great dome was not supported from below but suspended by a golden chain from heaven. Like the Russian ambassadors, Procopius emphasised the sanctity of the interior space: "Whenever anyone enters to pray, he understands at once that it is not by human power and skill, but by God's will that this work has been so finely finished. His mind is lifted up to God and floats on air, feeling that God cannot be far away, but must especially love to dwell in this place, which He has chosen."

Similar themes echo throughout the Byzantine period, as for example in the semi-legendary *Narrative of Haghia Sophia*, which tells that the bricks of the building were stamped with the verses of Psalm 45, "God is in her midst, she shall not be moved", and that the plan was given to the emperor by an angel. Probably first written in the ninth century, the *Narrative* proved to be the most popular and the most enduring of the numerous writings concerning the

ABOVE THE VIRGIN AND CHILD IN THE APSE WAS HAGHIA SOPHIA'S FIRST FIGURATIVE MOSAIC, ADDED THREE CENTURIES AFTER IT WAS BUILT, AND GREATLY REVERED. THE CHURCH HAD NEVER DISPLAYED FIGURES ON ITS WALLS, EVEN BEFORE THE 8TH-CENTURY ICONOCLAST CONTROVERSY THAT BANNED IMAGES IN CHURCHES. DEDICATED ON EASTER DAY, 867, THE MOSAIC CELEBRATED THE REVIVAL IN THE EFFICACY OF ICONS



RIGHT THE 13TH-CENTURY DEESIS IN THE GALLERY – CHRIST FLANKED BY THE VIRGIN MARY AND JOHN THE BAPTIST – IS ONE OF THE MOST MOVING IMAGES IN BYZANTINE ART. IT INSPIRED THE DEESIS IN THE 14TH-CENTURY CHURCH OF THE CHORA (PAGE 155), THOUGH THE CHORA'S CONFINED SPACE LEFT NO ROOM FOR JOHN THE BAPTIST

OPPOSITE ONE OF THE ARCHANGELS FLANKING THE VIRGIN AND CHILD IN THE APSE IS VISIBLE ABOVE THE OTTOMAN IMPERIAL LOGGIA, WHICH WAS BUILT BY THE ITALIAN-SWISS FOSSATI BROTHERS IN 1847–49, WHEN ABDÜLMECID I COMMISSIONED THEM TO RESTORE THE BUILDING. AYASOFYA HAD ALWAYS BEEN HELD IN HIGH ESTEEM AS THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE'S PRIMARY MOSQUE

الله جل جلاله

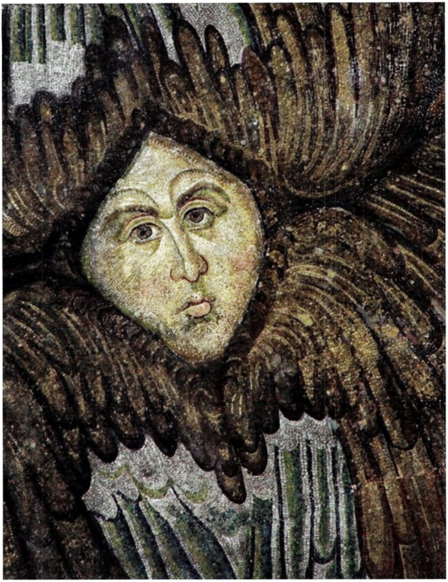
history of the building; it was translated into Latin, medieval Russian, Ottoman Turkish, Persian and modern Greek, and it forms the basis of almost all later "legendary" discussions of the building. Elements of the *Narrative* have found their way into visitors' accounts of the capital, ranging from medieval Russian pilgrims to modern-day tourists. A Greek copy prepared at the behest of Mehmed the Conqueror in 1474 is among the surviving imperial manuscripts in the Topkapı Palace.

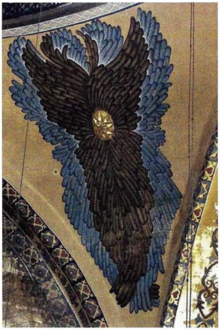
Popular though it might have been, the *Narrative* is notoriously inaccurate. For example, the old church had been destroyed in the Nike Riots of 532, and although the riots are mentioned in the text, we are told that it was Justinian's decision to tear down the church and rebuild it. In addition, it gives the name of the architect as Ignatius, not Anthemius or Isidorus. The text also places the collapse of the first dome after Justinian's death, not before, and names the same Ignatius as the architect of its rebuilding. Moreover, Ignatius blames the failure of the first dome on its height and is claimed to have rebuilt it with a lower profile – the exact opposite of what actually happened. In spite of such errors, at its simplest level the *Narrative* is full of great stories that are still repeated by tour guides, textbooks and university lecturers. For example, I still find it difficult to discuss the sixth-century construction without relating how Justinian is said to have exclaimed, "Solomon, I have vanquished thee!" at the dedication.

The popular story of the guardian angel and the mason's apprentice appears for the first time here as well: a mysterious messenger arrives while the workers are away; he sends the apprentice to find the emperor, assuring him that he will watch over the building until the boy returns; Justinian realises the messenger is angelic, and exiles the apprentice so that he can never return, thus guaranteeing permanent divine protection for the church.

I'm also particularly fascinated by the curious construction details, such as the recipe for the mortar, which includes the juice of boiled barley in place of water to make it sticky, as well as the insertion of relics into every 12th course of bricks. And modern scientists have found it necessary to test the alleged properties of the lightweight bricks from Rhodes that the text claims were employed in the construction.

These legends continue to be repeated because they reflect some basic truths, if not about the building, at least about the perceptions of it. As Constantinople shrank from the large scale of the Early Christian centuries to the small scale of the medieval centuries, the city lost contact with its past. What had been carefully written as history following in the classical tradition





ABOVE A RECENTLY REVEALED SERAPHIM IN ONE OF THE PENDENTIVES. SERAPHIM, VIRGIN AND CHILD AND ARCHANGELS WERE ALL STILL VISIBLE IN 1672, TWO CENTURIES AFTER THE CHURCH HAD BEEN CONVERTED TO A MOSQUE

LEFT BY THE EARLY 18TH CENTURY THE MOSAIC IMAGERY HAD BEEN CONCEALED. WHEN THE FOSSATIS RESTORED THE MOSQUE IN THE LATE 1840S, THEY HAD A PEEK AT WHAT LAY BELOW, THEN COVERED UP THE SERAPHIM FACES WITH GILDED BOSSES

OPPOSITE ALTHOUGH THE FIGURE OF THE VIRGIN MARY IS A FULL FIVE METRES TALL, IT IS DWARFED BY AYASOFYA'S COLOSSAL SIZE. THE DOMES WERE PAINTED IN THE 1840S IN A DEEP, SHINY VARNISH THAT GAVE THE SURFACE THE TEXTURE OF POLISHED LEATHER BUT HAS SINCE WORN OFF became the stuff of myth and legend in the subsequent period. It is not surprising that the construction of a building as ambitious as that of Haghia Sophia was a source of wonder to the ninth-century writer. The suggestion that it was built by one hundred teams of one hundred workers (that is, 10,000 workers), each led by a master mason, may overstate the actual size of the sixth-century workforce, but it provides the necessary contrast to the small buildings constructed by small workshops more familiar to the writer. While we may quibble with the facts as presented in the *Narrative*, there is nevertheless an element of truth to it.

Not only the building, but also its mosaic decoration came to be regarded as miraculous. Surprisingly, the sixth-century decorative programme contained no figural mosaics, but the building had been dedicated to a concept – the Holy Wisdom – not to a person. The architecture with its geometric complexity is best understood in conceptual terms, and the mosaic decoration was subordinate to the grand architectural gesture.

After the end of the Iconoclast Controversy in 843, however, images were gradually added. After all, Haghia Sophia was the greatest showcase of the Byzantine empire, and as the church was associated with both the emperor and the patriarch, it was important for the building to project official policy. The Synodikon of Orthodoxy had emphasised the appropriateness and necessity of religious images in Orthodox worship. What better place to display them than Haghia Sophia?

The building fulfilled a unique function within Byzantine society, and its decoration needed to project Orthodox belief while emphasising its position at the heart of the empire. Because of its immensity, however, images had to be really big to be noticed at all; moreover, because of the height of the vaults, extensive and expensive scaffoldings were needed for the artisans to work. Not surprisingly, mosaics were added only gradually and in select locations.

Figural decoration began with the apse, into which a great mosaic of the enthroned Virgin and Child was inserted. The figures were cut into the pre-existing gold ground, with archangels placed on the vault to either side. The Virgin here is close to five metres tall but nevertheless dwarfed by the space. In the sermon he delivered at the dedication of the apse mosaic, at Easter 867, the Patriarch Photius emphasised a direct relationship between icons and the Incarnation of Christ. That Christ allowed his sanctity to be "represented" in the flesh was the greatest justification for the representation of holy figures in icons. For Photius, the equation could work both ways; as he explained, "Christ was born in the flesh and is carried in the arms of his mother. This is seen, proven and demonstrated by icons." For the Byzantines, an image of the Virgin and Child was never just a picture – it was a statement of Orthodox theology and a proclamation of the efficacy of icons. The image in the apse of Haghia Sophia stands as one of the most revered and most often repeated of all iconic formulae.

Photius's dedicatory sermon concluded with the suggestion that this was to be the first of many images to be added to Haghia Sophia: "Grant to those whom you have made emperors on Earth to consecrate the remainder of the church with holy images." We may assume that at more or less the same time an image of Christ Pantokrator was inserted at the crown of the dome, as well as other images, now lost but known from texts or drawings: saints, archangels, major and minor prophets, church fathers (a few still preserved), metrical inscriptions, and narrative scenes from the life of Christ.

The recently uncovered seraph in the northeast pendentive was part of the last phase of decoration after the reconstruction of the dome in the mid-14th century. The totality did not quite match the standard Byzantine church programme, but the mosaics infused Haghia Sophia with potent, recognisable images – and emphasised the role of images in Orthodox devotion.

With the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople in 1453, Fatih Mehmed converted Haghia Sophia to a mosque as his first official act. The conversion involved minimal physical transformation, and even its name remained the same – Ayasofya Camii in Turkish. A minaret was constructed, a *mihrab* was added; Islamic relics and Ottoman battle trophies were displayed. But for the Christians after this time – both European and Orthodox – Haghia Sophia became a sort of Wailing Wall, the bearer of historical memory, of a lost heritage and a vanished civilisation.

With the Ottoman conversion, the building continued to accrue legends and stories of miracles. For example, that when the dome collapsed on the day of the Prophet Mohammed's birth, it could only be repaired with a special mortar made of sand from Mecca and water from the well of Zemzem. Similarly, that reciting the opening sura of the Koran before the doors of Ayasofya, which were said to be made from the wood of Noah's Ark, could guarantee a safe voyage. And water from both the sacred well and a sweating column were claimed to have curative powers. Even while a mosque, the building was still regarded as miraculous, by both Muslims and Christians.

Until the early 18th century, visitors to Ayasofya could still see figural mosaics on the walls and vaults. The earliest illustrated account by Guillaume-Joseph Grelot recorded what he saw in situ in 1672: seraphim in the pendentives; standing figures in the eastern arch; the Virgin in the apse; archangels in the vault to either side; and what he calls the "Holy Face on the Veil of Veronica" at the crown of the bema vault. Here he must have been referring to the Mandylion, the face of Christ miraculously imprinted on a handkerchief – a relic once housed in the Great Palace.

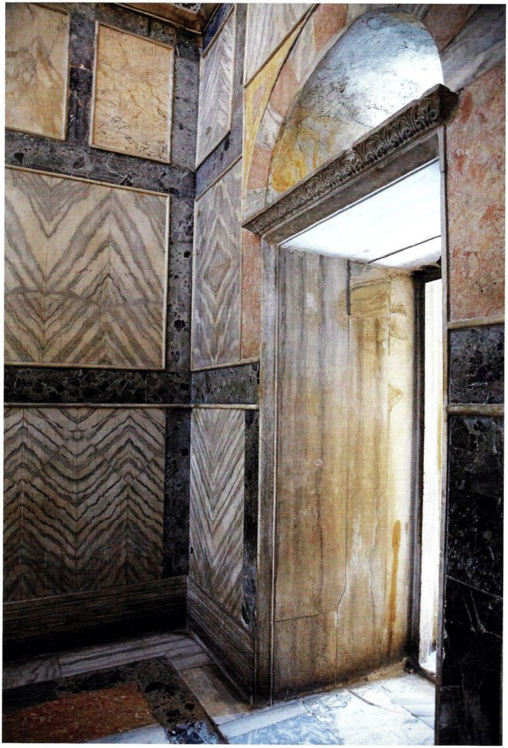
No other visitors mention this image, however, and when the Byzantine Institute of America uncovered the mosaics in the 1930s they found only a solid field of gold tesserae where the Mandylion should have been. What Grelot saw was at best a figment of his imagination: a miraculous image that wasn't there. Or was it a miracle? Could Grelot have witnessed the miraculous appearance of a miraculous image inside a miraculous building?

Robert Ousterhout teaches Byzantine art and architecture at the University of Pennsylvania. His book 'A Byzantine Settlement in Cappadocia' appeared in a second, revised edition in 2011

The Church of the Chora

The small pretender

KARİYE CAMİİ



Contrasting with the monumentality of Haghia Sophia, later Byzantine churches revel in complexity. Perhaps most impressive is the church of the Chora Monastery (later the Kariye Mosque and now a museum). It offers the viewer an insistently three-dimensional experience, as the building presents an intricate and ever-changing pattern of forms. Because of the smaller scale, the experience is more personal as well – the Chora seduces rather than overwhelms.

It was rebuilt and lavishly decorated c1316–21 under the patronage of Theodore Metochites, a prominent politician, intellectual and poet, whose personality and guiding hand are evident throughout. Despite the different dimensions and design, Metochites had Haghia Sophia in the back of his mind. His famous donor portrait above the entrance echoes the mosaic above the entrance to Haghia Sophia, in which an emperor, possibly Leo the Wise, kneels before an enthroned Christ.

Similarly, the Deesis mosaic in the Chora follows the model of the Deesis mosaic in Haghia Sophia (page 150). Although the Chora eliminates John the Baptist, the images of Christ and the Virgin Mary are the same size as their counterparts in Haghia Sophia.

While the earlier mosaic is comfortably situated in the gallery of Haghia Sophia, the Chora's Deesis is too big for the small narthex (lobby) and almost impossible to view straight on. To take in the full spectacle, the viewer must stand at the entrance – that is, directly in front of the portrait of Theodore Metochites. One wonders if that was intentional.

RIGHT THE DEESIS MOSAIC IN THE NARTHEX, FEATURING THE VIRGIN AND CHRIST, TO WHOM THE MONASTERY AND CHURCH WERE RESPECTIVELY DEDICATED. ABOVE, CHRIST APPEARS IN THE DOME MEDALLION SURROUNDED BY HIS ANCESTORS, STARTING WITH ADAM

LEFT IN THIS QUIET CORNER OF THE NARTHEX, THE MARBLE CLADDING IS OF 'BOOK-MATCHED' PANELS OF PROCONNESIAN MARBLE FROM THE ISLAND OF MARMARA, WITH ITS DISTINCTIVE GREY VEINING, FRAMED BY 'VERDE ANTICO'

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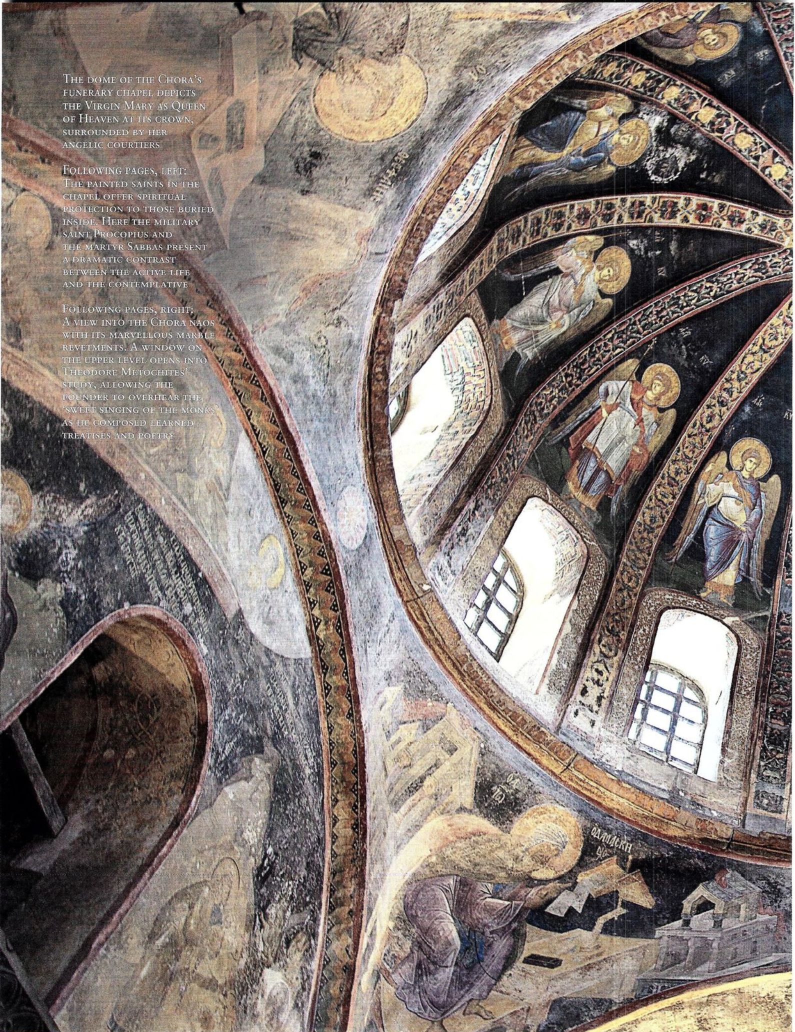

The dome of the Chora's funerary chapel depicts the Virgin Mary as Queen of Heaven at its crown, surrounded by her angelic courtiers

Following pages, left: The painted saints in the chapel offer spiritual protection to those buried inside. Here the military saint Procopius and the martyr Sabbas present a dramatic contrast between the active life and the contemplative

Following pages, right: A view into the Chora naos with its marvellous marble revetments. A window on the upper level opens into Theodore Metochites' study, allowing the founder to overhear the 'sweet singing of the monks' as he composed learned treatises and poetry

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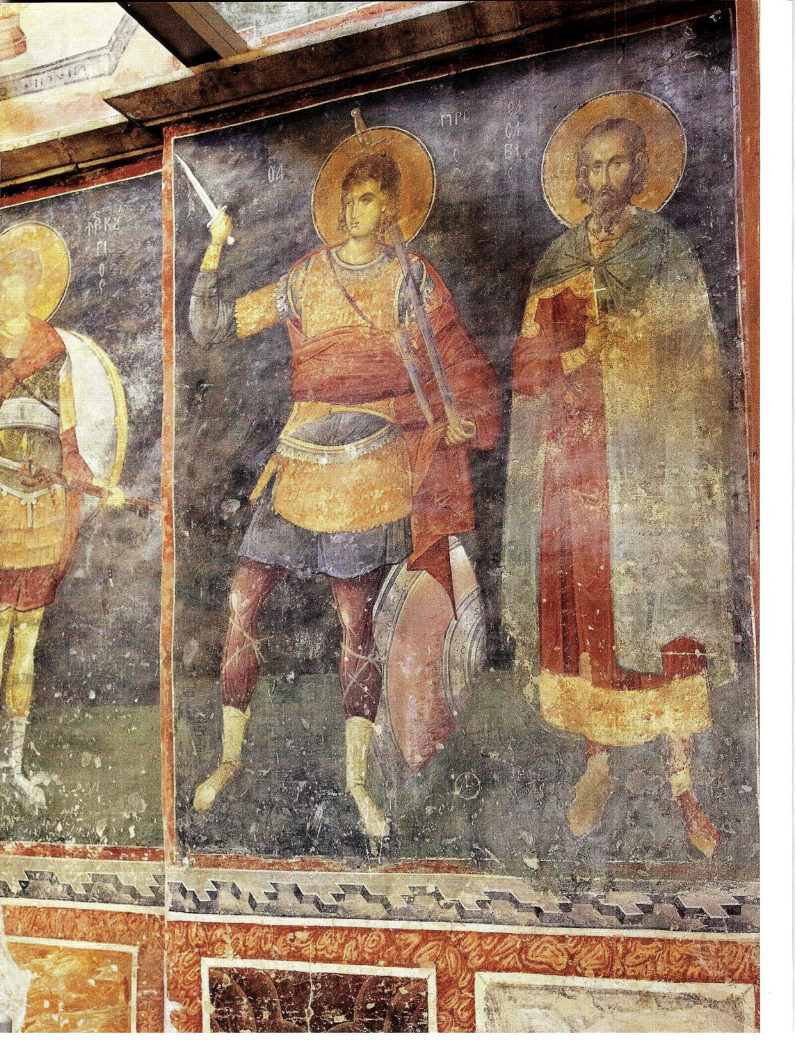
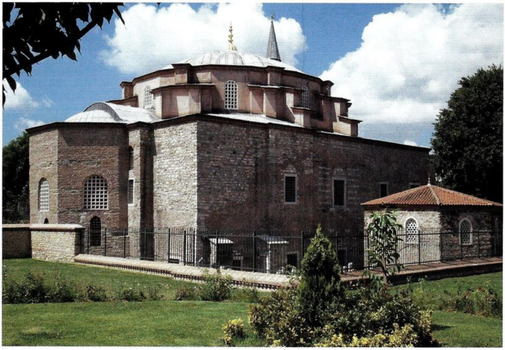


Church of Saints Sergius and Bacchus

Adventures in geometry

KÜÇÜK AYASOFYA CAMİİ



As the immediate predecessor to Haghia Sophia, the Church of Sts Sergius and Bacchus represents one of Byzantium's most innovative architectural creations. Now a mosque known as Küçük Ayasofya (Little Haghia Sophia), it is also the oldest continuously functioning religious site in the city. Recently restored, it is well worth a visit.

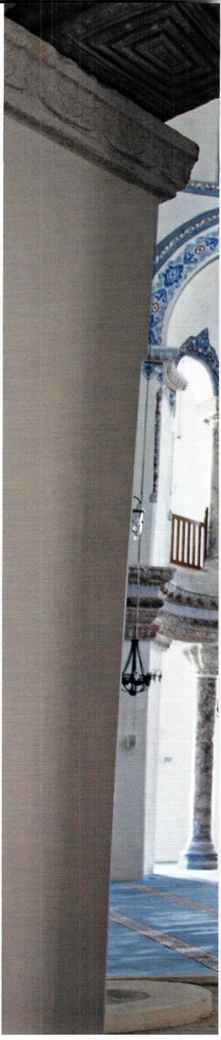
Begun in the mid-520s, the church, dedicated to two Syrian military saints, was a part of the Hormisdas Palace, Justinian and Theodora's residence prior to his accession to the throne in 527. The interior gives a good sense of the experimental geometry that came to dominate the design of Haghia Sophia.

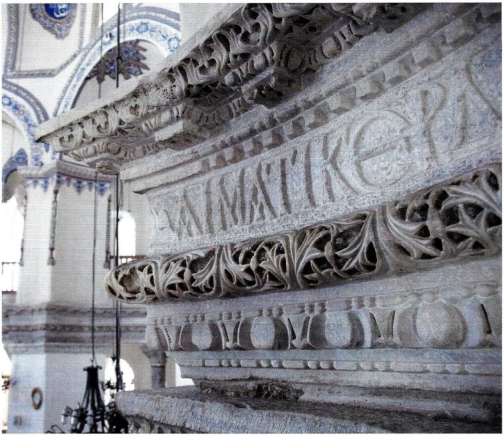
In both plan and elevation, the interior presents a subtle alternation of curvilinear and rectilinear forms. The domed octagonal core measures 50 Byzantine feet across – half the diameter of Haghia Sophia's dome. The central space billows outwards with alternating rectangular and semicircular recesses and columnar screens opening into the ambulatory and the gallery above it.

The ground floor is marked by a heavy, horizontal architrave; lighter arcades frame the gallery. The column capitals also alternate: curvilinear "melon" capitals below and rectilinear impost capitals above. Even the dome participates in the geometric complexity, alternating flat and curved segments as it rises.

ABOVE STS SERGIUS AND BACCHUS FROM THE NORTHEAST. FOLLOWING THE RECENT RESTORATION, THE AREA AROUND IT WAS CLEARED TO FORM A SMALL PARK. IN FACT, THE ORIGINAL BUILDING WAS NEVER MEANT TO BE SEEN IN ISOLATION LIKE THIS. AS PART OF THE HORMISDAS PALACE, IT WAS FLANKED BY A CEREMONIAL HALL TO THE NORTH AND ANOTHER CHURCH TO THE SOUTH

OPPOSITE THE VIEW FROM THE AMBULATORY THAT RUNS ROUND THREE SIDES OF THE BUILDING. EVEN WITH THE EXTERIOR EXPOSED, THE FIRST-TIME VISITOR IS SURPRISED BY THE INTRICATE GEOMETRY AND SPATIAL COMPLEXITY OF ITS INTERIOR



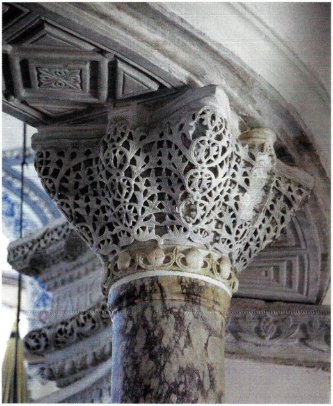


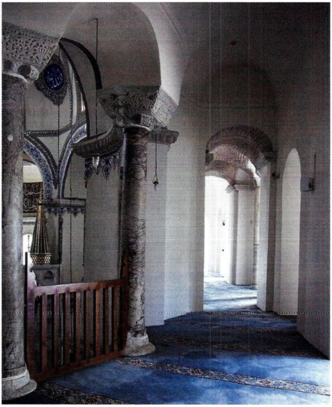
Left A dedicatory inscription fills the entablature, lauding the piety of its benefactors, Justinian and Theodora. Once gilded and painted, the letters would have been much more visible, set against a dark blue background of mastic paste

Below left With their surfaces now partially broken, 'melon' capitals reveal the delicacy of their carving. They once bore monograms of Justinian and Theodora

Below A visit to the gallery reveals how the building has settled. With the flanking buildings long since vanished, the weight of the dome has caused the piers and outer walls to lean outwards

Opposite The octagonal central space with its columnar screens, alternating flat and curved, in a dramatic double-shell design. The dome above is similarly composed of alternating flat and curved segments

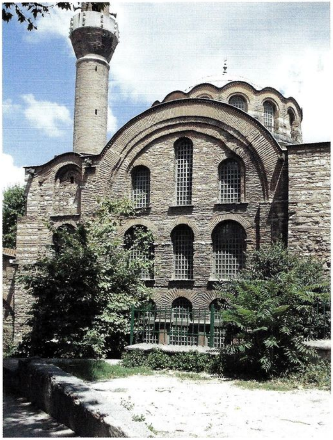




Church of The Theotokos Kyriotissa

The church that kept its marbles

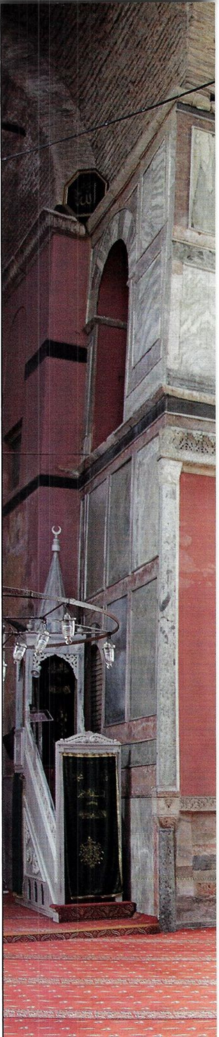
KALENDERHANE CAMİİ



LEFT THEOTOKOS KYRIOTISSA, SEEN FROM THE SOUTH. THE LAST GREAT BUILDING PROJECT BEFORE THE LATIN CONQUEST OF 1204, THE KYRIOTISSA STANDS AT THE EASTERN END OF THE AQUEDUCT OF VALENS

RIGHT THE INTERIOR OF THE NAOS (NAVE) LOOKING EAST. MUCH OF THE MARBLE CLADDING HAS BEEN PRESERVED, ALTHOUGH FEW TRACES OF PAINTED DECORATION SURVIVE. FRAMED ICONS ONCE FLANKED THE SANCTUARY, WHERE THE LARGE STRAWBERRY-PINK PANELS NOW APPEAR

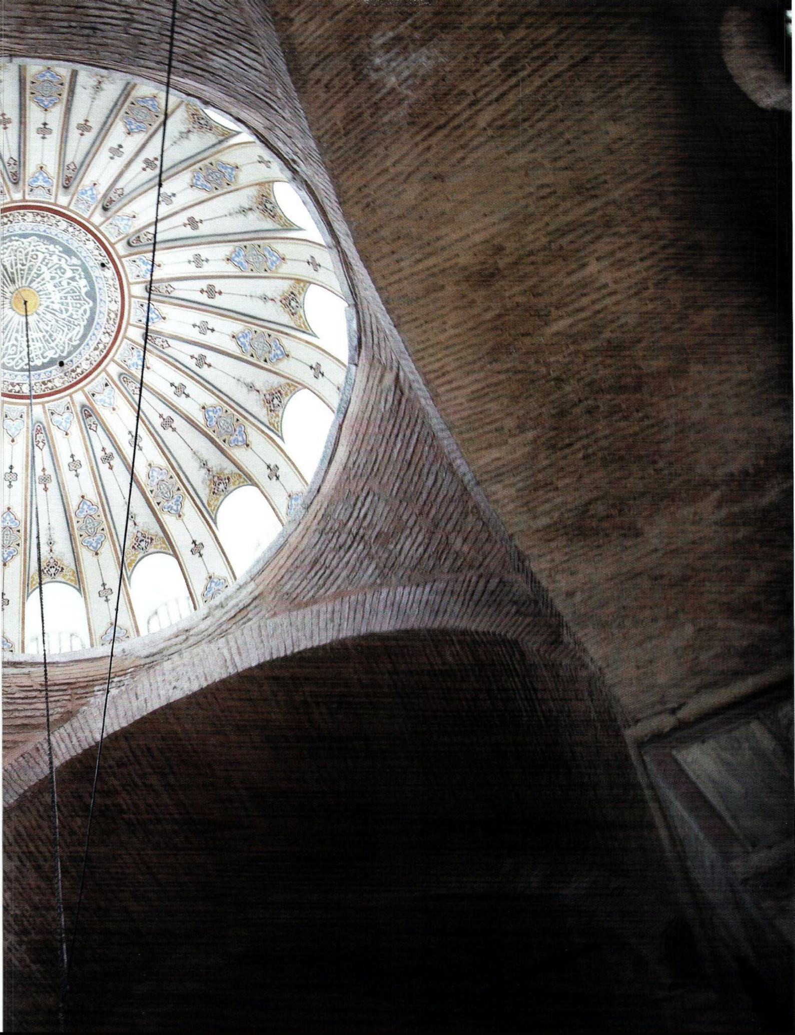
FOLLOWING PAGES THE GREAT PAINTED RIBBED DOME RISES ABOVE A GREEK-CROSS PLAN, BRACED BY FOUR BARREL VAULTS



Built on the eve of the Latin Conquest of the city (1204), the Kalenderhane Mosque in Saraçhane, originally the church of the Theotokos Kyriotissa (Mother of God Our Lady), one of the largest of the later Byzantine churches, preserved much of its elegant marble encrustation. Not often visited, in spite of its hospitable imam, the building is tucked away by a stretch of the Aqueduct of Valens, behind the Şehzade Mosque. Historically it is one of the richest sites in the city, with portions dating from as early as the fifth century.

Excavations there revealed Constantinople's only pre-Iconoclastic religious mosaic, which depicts the presentation of Christ in the Temple (now in the Archaeological Museum).

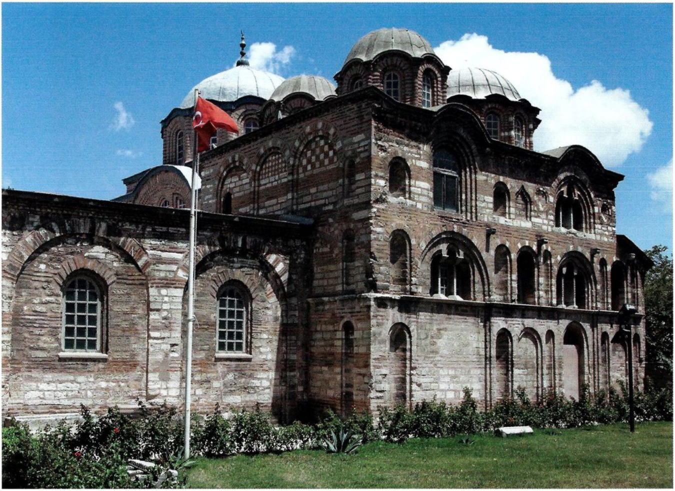
During the 13th century, the Franciscans occupied the building, and one of its chapels was decorated with wall paintings, including one of the earliest cycles of the life of Francis (page 147).



Monastery of the Theotokos Pammakaristos

Splendour and solitude

FETHİYE CAMİİ



ABOVE THE 14TH-CENTURY FUNERARY CHAPEL OF THE THEOTOKOS PAMMAKARISTOS MONASTERY FROM THE SOUTHWEST. FROM THE TIME OF THE OTTOMAN CONQUEST IN 1453 UNTIL IT WAS CONVERTED TO A MOSQUE IN 1586, THE PAMMAKARISTOS SERVED AS THE SEAT OF THE ORTHODOX PATRIARCHATE

OPPOSITE THE INTERIOR OF THE FUNERARY CHAPEL, LOOKING WEST TOWARDS THE ENTRANCE. MEMBERS OF THE KOMNENOS AND PALAIOLOGOS FAMILIES WERE BURIED IN THE CHURCH

Another often overlooked monument of the same era as the Kalenderhane is the Monastery of the Theotokos Pammakaristos, or Mother of God the All-Blessed, now the Fethiye Museum, a short walk to the east of the Chora. The main part of the complex dates from the 12th century, but the funerary chapel – now a museum and the only area open to the public – was constructed in the first decade of the 14th century by Maria Doukaina Brana Palaiologina to house the tomb of her husband, Michael Glabas Tarchaneiotes, a high court official who had supported the monastery as early as 1263.

The immediate predecessor of the Chora, the tiny chapel retains significant portions of its mosaic decoration and its marble revetments. The cornices are inscribed with a lengthy poem honouring the deceased, while heraldic imagery below the upper cornice proclaims his nobility. Christ gazes down from the main dome and appears a second time in the main apse, flanked by the Virgin Mary and John the Baptist. Most impressive are the busts of craggy, bearded monks clustered in the corners. Enveloping the tiny chapel, these form virtual choirs, praying for the soul of the deceased Michael in perpetuity. Dramatically contrasting with the hustle and bustle of tour groups at the Chora, the quiet solitude of the Pammakaristos offers a fitting conclusion to a stroll through the city.

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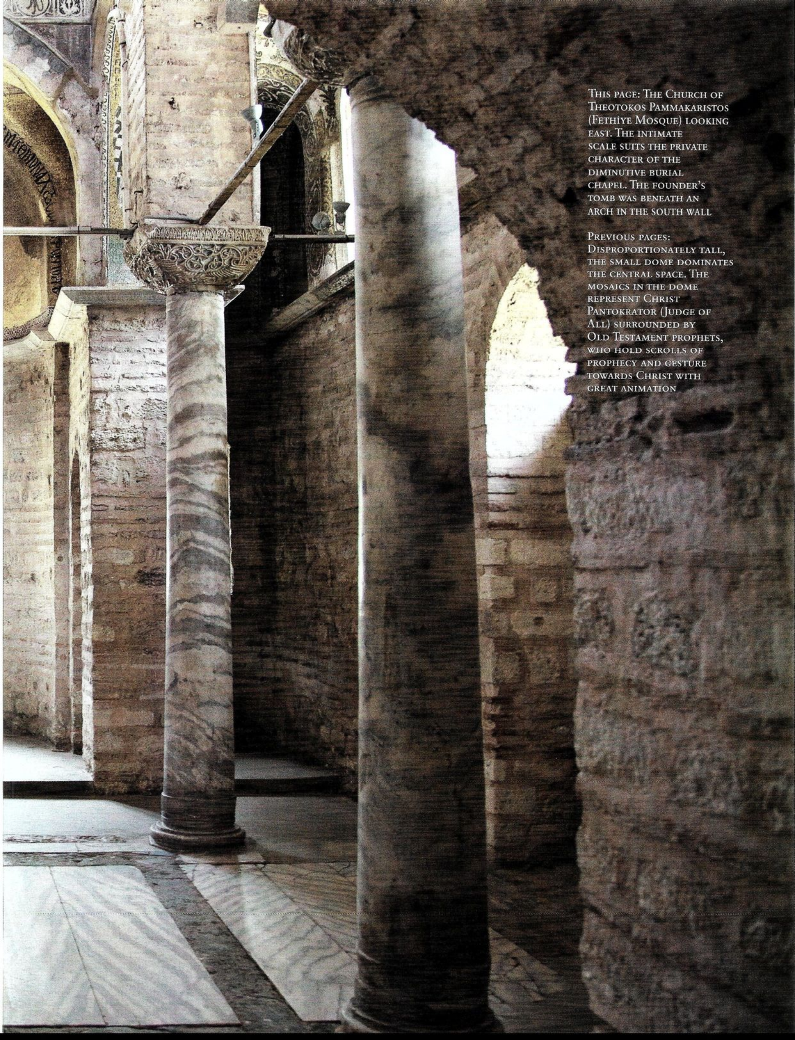
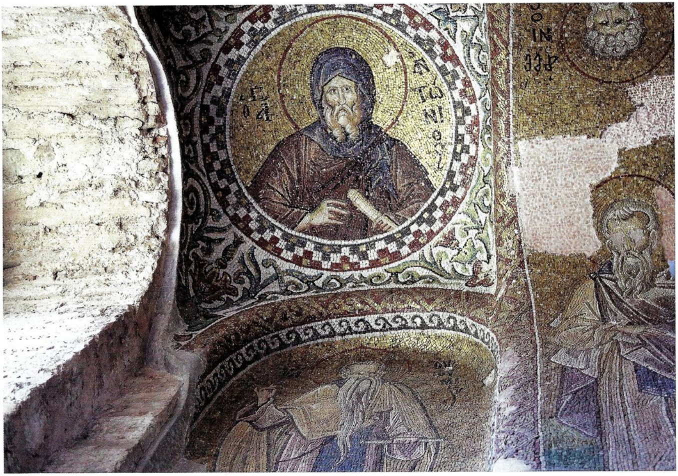
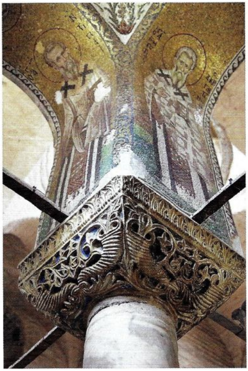
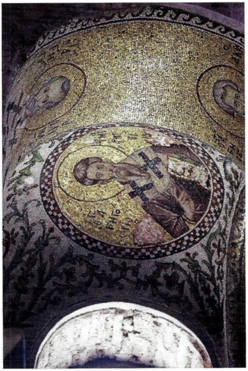


This page: The Church of Theotokos Pammakaristos (Fethiye Mosque) looking east. The intimate scale suits the private character of the diminutive burial chapel. The founder's tomb was beneath an arch in the south wall

Previous pages: Disproportionately tall, the small dome dominates the central space. The mosaics in the dome represent Christ Pantokrator (Judge of All) surrounded by Old Testament prophets, who hold scrolls of prophecy and gesture towards Christ with great animation





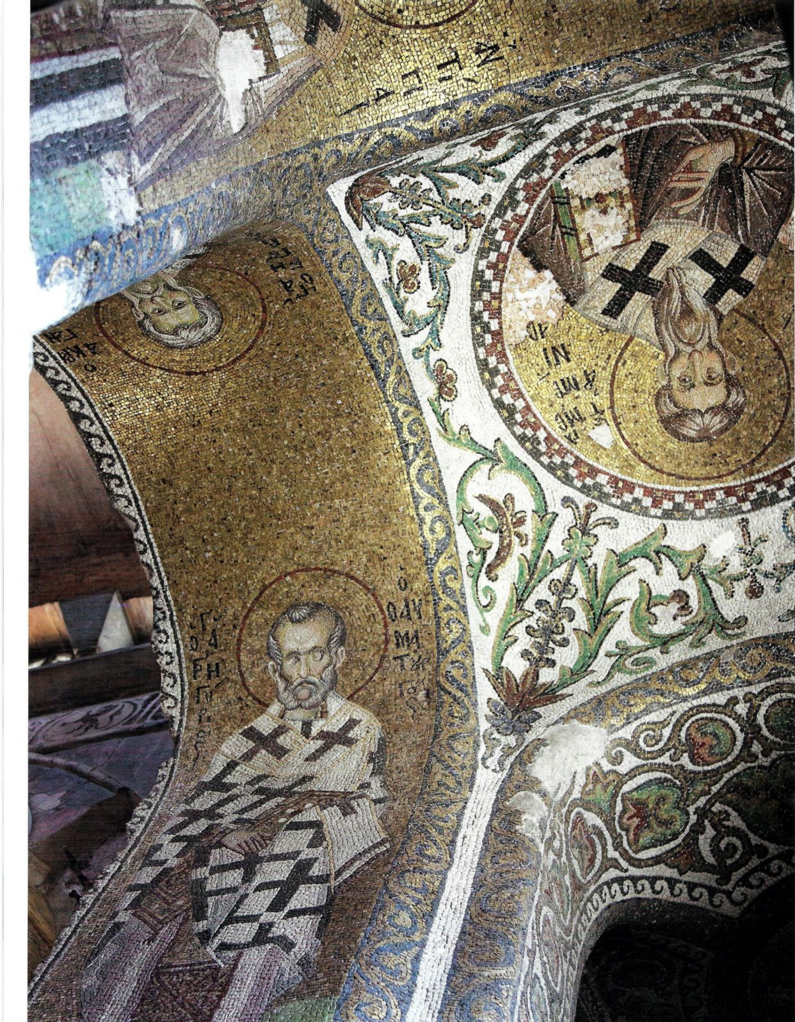


Above Monks fill the Fethiye's western vaults: St Anthony (top) and St Euthymios, the fathers of Egyptian and Palestinian monasticism

Far left Bishops fill the eastern vaults. St Antipas and St Gregory of Agrigento stand above a painted capital decorated with cornucopias

Left A cluster of bishops named Gregory: St Gregory of Armenia flanked by St Gregory the Wonder Worker and St Gregory of Agrigento. The more famous Gregory of Nyssa and Gregory of Nazianzus were more prominently situated

Opposite Gregory the Wonder Worker stands to the left, with a bust of Gregory of Armenia in the vault


Ο ΑΓ ΓΡΗΓΟΡΙΟΣ
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Private view

Andrew Finkel applauds as Istanbul's polite society learns to stand up and fight for its city's heritage, fears the fallout from the new metro system, and wishes there was a law against bad taste in architecture

Civil defence?

I have two ready answers to the question "How have you come to live in Istanbul all these years?" The first is that I am enamoured of the city itself – the history on the skyline, the blue expanse of the Bosphorus Straits, my own neighbourhood of wooden houses along a central promenade. The second is that I admire the civility that infuses everyday life. I enjoy the company of people I nod to in the street, the animated conversations in the shops, the kindness of strangers to someone born elsewhere.

For some time I had been fending off the suspicion that these two were incompatible, and that I lived in a city so well-behaved it is incapable of raising more than a polite cough to protest its own destruction. In London, environmentalists and community activists have stalled for a decade construction of a third runway for Heathrow Airport. In Istanbul, the government announces its intention to build a third Istanbul airport with six runways, and it is treated as a *fait accompli*.

I live in a city with a famously low rate of crimes against the person, yet which seemed to look the other way at crimes against its own environment.

For years I shared an office overlooking an inner-city patch of green, which all the world now knows as Gezi Park. Last May it was the scene of pitched battles between protesters and police. At the time I didn't even register it had a name other than the "bit of green off Taksim Square". I don't remember sitting there with a lunchtime sandwich; it had no inviting air.

Still, I must have liked it enough to tag along to a protest meeting in February 2012 against a scheme to develop the park and cut down its trees. The demonstration did not strike me as an example of a city awakening from its slumber. There weren't many people, and far too many were my friends. What hope, I remember thinking, for a movement to stop the construction of the third Bosphorus Bridge, the behemoth which will pave the way for a conurbation, the devastation of an important habitat and the destruction of over two million trees.

At the end of May something snapped. The campaign to save Taksim's trees became a campaign to change the country. The near-universal consensus is that the authorities' heavy-handedness provoked the very unrest they hoped to quell.

An Istanbul bent out of shape is slowly returning to normal. There are no more angry protests, just community meetings in local parks. Demonstrators began to show their colours not with gas masks and banners but standing at dignified attention until the police or their aching limbs told them to move on. For now the Gezi plane trees are safe. The government says it will respect a court order; and the municipality has been planting flowers, even a few more trees, in the park.

The perverse upside of the official rhetoric to deal summarily with the protests is that it has rattled the markets. It will be harder to finance those cherished white elephants, including that $20-plus-billion third airport.

If many are now mobilised it is because they have seen a government behave with less decency than they expect of themselves. All of which means that I was wrong. The battle to save Istanbul may just have been joined. It has not been won. But whatever gains are made will be because of, and not despite, the basic civility of the people who live here.

Journey into the unknown

Last Tuesday the city celebrated the 90th anniversary of Turkey's founding with unusual pomp. Senior politicians cut the ribbon on a spectacular new metro system that runs some 200 feet below the Sea of Marmara that can ferry 1.5 million people every day between the European and Asian sides of the city.

Next day, a power outage forced passengers in one train to disembark and walk through the tunnel to the next station. Predictable teething troubles for a major project? Yes, but the malfunction was also a reminder that Istanbul has bought itself not just a mass-transit solution to its transportation woes but a ticket into the unknown.

Murat Güvenc, professor of urban studies at Istanbul Şehir University, called the new system "a pandora's box, a rare example of experimenting with the fate of a city of 14 million." His work on metro systems elsewhere makes him confident the Marmaray system will change the visage of Istanbul. He is also confident no one knows exactly how.

The obvious comparison is to Republican Day 40 years ago, when Istanbul inaugurated the first of two suspension bridges across the Bosphorus – at a time when the population

cont. page 180

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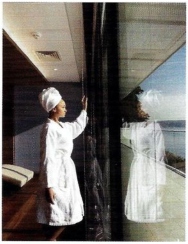

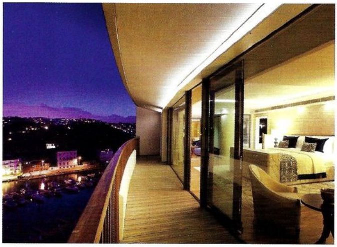

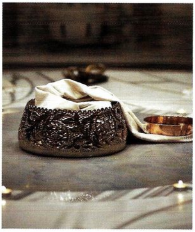

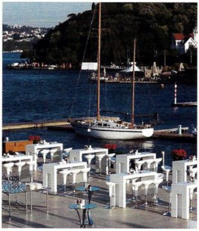

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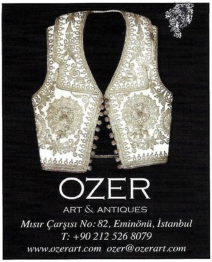

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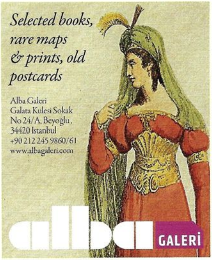

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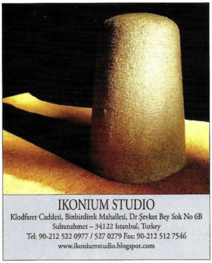

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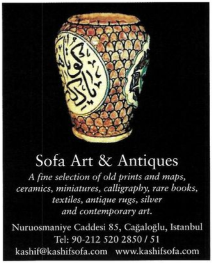

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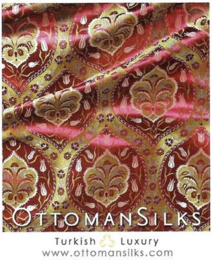

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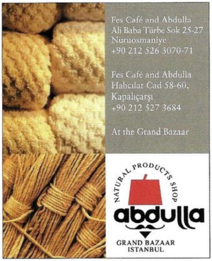

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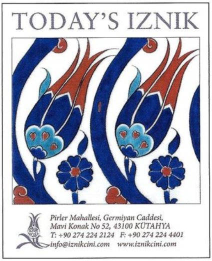

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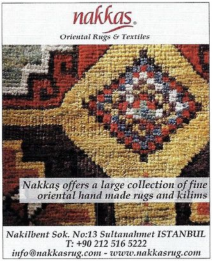

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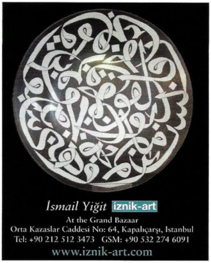

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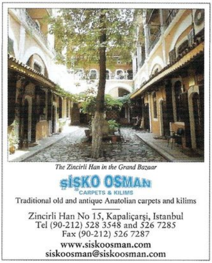

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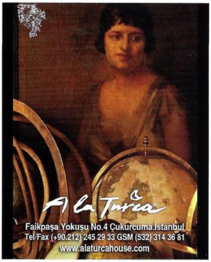

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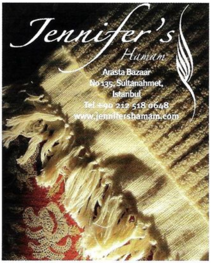

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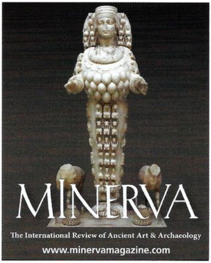

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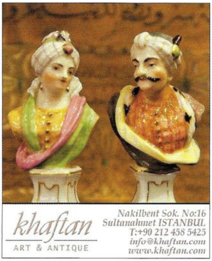

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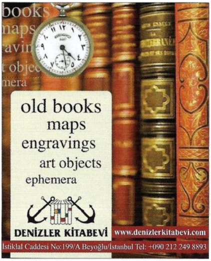

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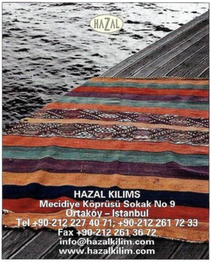

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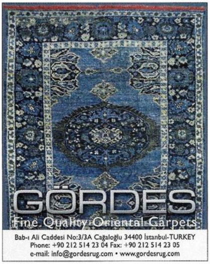

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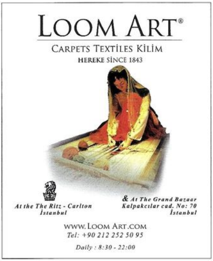

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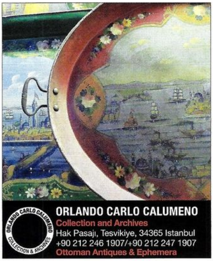

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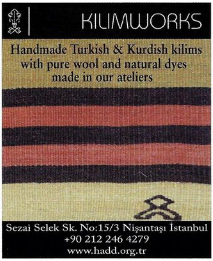

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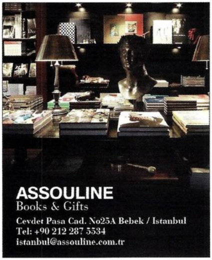

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was just over 2 million. The result was the transformation of the Asian side from a green landscape of scattered communities into a densely populated commuter belt. After the second bridge was built in 1988 a small village called Sultanbeyli grew almost overnight into a city of 300,000 souls. The bridges and its feeder roads became the axes along which the city expanded.

Now the growth points will be the metro stations. Old centres will loose their importance. New ones will arise. A station in the historical old city will become a major transport hub. Good or bad, the changes will affect the way the entire city works.

The government might argue that it is better to build first and fix any bugs later. But some of its plans for Istanbul are so grand they could cause damage well beyond repair.

More worrisome: having just built this mass-transit metro system, city officials are now planning a parallel tunnel for cars. As Güvenç says, that's "like pushing the brake and the accelerator at the same time".

Magnificent mess

I have written before about *The Magnificent Century*, the made-in-Turkey soap depicting harum-scarum adventures in the imperial household of Süleyman the Magnificent. The series reaches farther than the Ottoman Empire did in the mid-16th century – from France to the Ukraine, the Czech Republic to Japan – with 150 million viewers in its thrall.

Alas, it is an empire in decline. The authorities have criticised it for reducing the glories of the Ottoman past to a saga of household intrigues. It is in its last season.

If only the law against bad taste extended to misguided construction projects that attempt to revive the Ottomans' glory. One tribute enjoying official support is for a vast mosque on Çamlıca hilltop, overlooking all Istanbul from the Asian side. Its design is a copycat version of the high imperial style of Sinan, who built the Suleymaniye Mosque. Sinan's mosque is a breathtaking solution to the problem of constructing from stone a single symmetrical space topped with domes and semi-domes. The new mosque is an obese reinforced-concrete counterfeit. Even the conservative press is shocked by its banality.

Worse, the municipality is finishing a mock-suspension bridge across the Golden Horn far bigger and more attention-seeking than is needed to span so narrow a body of water. It ruins the view of that real Ottoman masterpiece, the Süleymaniye. ◆

Some of this material was first published in The New York Times global edition: http://latitude.blogs.nytimes.com/author/andrew-finkel

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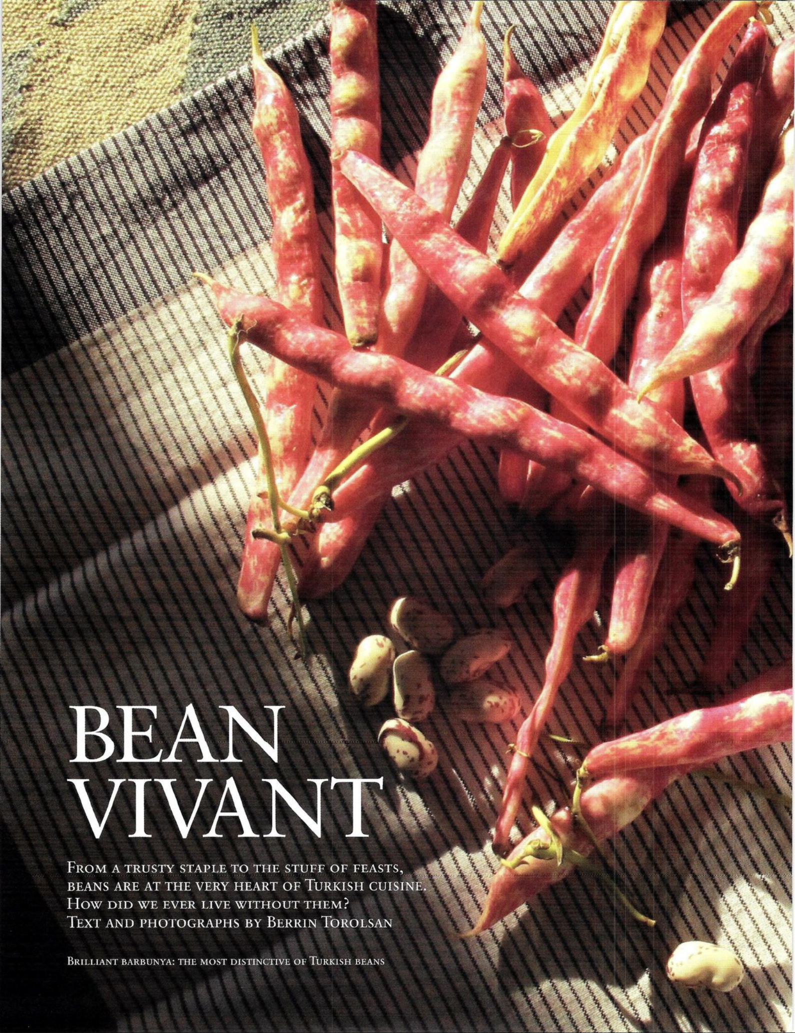

BEAN VIVANT

From a trusty staple to the stuff of feasts, beans are at the very heart of Turkish cuisine. How did we ever live without them?

Text and photographs by Berrin Torolsan

Brilliant barbunya: the most distinctive of Turkish beans

Even after so many years I can still recall the smell on the first day of school after the summer holidays: a distinct combination of ink from newly printed textbooks, the freshly cut paper of our notebooks, the woody scent of sharpened pencils. An equally vivid olfactory memory from the time is of the aroma of cooking beans wafting from our boarding-school kitchen. Beans with rice pilav was everyone's highlight in the otherwise meagre repertoire of school food.

In the city or the countryside, in schools, barracks and homes, beans are a Turkish staple enjoyed by all. It is the same everywhere: beans, tasty and nutritious, play a key role in feeding the world.

The most widely consumed and cultivated is *Phaseolus vulgaris*, the common bean (also called the haricot, garden or French bean), of which there are numerous varieties, differing in colour, shade, texture and flavour, with two distinct forms: climbing "pole" plants and "dwarf" bush plants.

Beans grow fast, produce plenty of fruit, and bear yet more when picked regularly. The tender young pods are cooked as vegetables. Later, the pods are discarded and the mature seeds are dried and preserved. While fresh beans are the pride and joy of weekly markets from spring to autumn, in winter, the dried bean is the prima donna of the legume world.

Beans are the only member of the large *Fabaceae* family to have come from the New World. All other legumes – chickpeas, peas, lentils, fava or broad beans, and so on – travelled from the Old World to the New after the Spanish conquest. Columbus first encountered our common bean in Cuba, recording in his ship's logbook on November 4, 1492, "faxones and fabas different from ours". Modern research confirms that beans had been domesticated from very early times and, like potatoes and corn, were already a staple crop from the tropics of Mexico to the high Andes, where wild varieties are still found.

Cataloguing the plants in the royal gardens of Madrid a century later, the royal gardener to Philip II, a priest named Gregorio de los Ríos, clearly identifies tobacco, sunflower and beans as American imports in his book of 1592, *Agricultura de Jardines*. His fellow botanists were clearly confused, however.

In 1543 the German physician Leonhart Fuchs – whose name lives on in the lovely garden plant fuchsia, with its drooping magenta blooms – published a monumental herbal with woodcuts, the *Kräuterbuch*, in which he listed *Gartenbohne* (*P vulgaris*) as originating in eastern countries.

Likewise, in Italy and France the common bean became known as *Phaselus turcicus* or *fasiol de Turquie*. Three centuries later, in 1884, the Swiss botanist Alphonse Pyramus de Candolle noted that "16th-century gardeners often called the species the Turkish bean", and suggested it "came originally from Western Asia". But if the bean, *fasulye* in modern Turkish, is clearly an American import, why was it believed in Europe, even by scholars, to be Turkish?

Professor Bert Fragner of Bamberg University in Bavaria comes to our aid, explaining how politics influences tradition and fashion in nutrition and cooking. The political axis of Madrid and Constantinople, two superpowers that were partners as well as rivals, had an enormous influence on the political climate shaping the economy and cuisine in the 16th and 17th centuries.

Commodities unknown to the Old World – tomatoes, paprika, corn and beans, not to mention the bird the English-speaking world knows as turkey – quickly found their way from the New World to Spain and onwards, via the North African coast and Egypt, to the Muslim enemy's capital, Constantinople. From there they spread all over the Ottoman territories, across the Balkans, Anatolia and into the Fertile Crescent, decades before Italy, France and the rest of Europe were introduced to these exotic goods. Mediterranean cuisine owes its surprisingly uniform use of American imports to this Spanish–Ottoman hegemony.

The Bulgarian-born food historian Maria Kaneva-Johnson notes that the earliest mention of "the stranger from across the Atlantic" is in a Turkish document at the beginning of the 16th century. She also quotes references to pole and dwarf beans in Ottoman tax records for vegetables sent to market in the provinces (*pashaluks*). By the 1550s beans were so well established in Turkey that the traveller Hans Dernschwam was pleased to note that "lentils and *faseole* don't cost much money". The fact that he uses the Turkish name suggests he was seeing the common bean for the first time.

Also worth remembering is the role of itinerant gardeners in introducing new crops to neighbouring countries. For 400 years these Ottoman market gardeners roamed freely, building seasonal gardens along the Empire's borders and even beyond, on the outskirts of European cities.

Professor Fragner concludes that by 1600 Ottoman cookery was the most advanced, fashionable and creative cuisine in Europe and the Mediterranean. Its influence can be traced as far as England. In 1699, at the age of 79, John Evelyn, best known for his diaries, wrote a book on salads, *Acetaria: A Discourse of Sallets*, which includes a recipe for a pickle of fresh green beans in brine and vinegar. The botanist Philip Miller suggests how to cook these beans, which he grew at the Chelsea Physic Gardens, where he was chief gardener for 50 years from 1722.

Green beans are very much part of the summer culinary repertoire in Turkey, cooked in olive oil, pickled, or stewed with meat. Tons are produced annually to be eaten in their tender pods. Mile upon mile of beans can be seen from the Caucasus to the Mediterranean, sometimes planted with corn, which the bean plants happily climb, as in the ancient agriculture of indigenous Americans.

The common green bean known as *ayşe kadın* – named after a long-forgotten lady of that name – is so prized and so popular in Turkey that it has almost become generic. Whoever Ayşe Kadın was, her hybrid lives on, unstringy and full of flavour. Turkish housewives taking their pick at market stalls have a habit of snapping the pods between their fingers to test for crispness and tenderness, though vendors will reprimand them, "Ladies, please prepare your beans at home!" The type known as *boncuk* (bead) *ayşe* has tiny bead-like seeds inside the pod, whereas

ÇOK ŞAHANE ÇATALCA BONCUK AYŞE
ÇOK ŞAHANE ULUDAG KINALI BARBUNYA
ÇOK ŞAHANE ÇATALCA KINALI BARBUNYA

A proud stallholder at a weekly Istanbul market advertises his beans as 'Çok Şahane' – very glorious. The red barbunya stand out from the green beans – from left, 'Ayşe Kadın', 'Boncuk Ayşe', 'Sırık Çalı' and 'Şeker Fasulye'

şeker (sugar) *ayşe*, as its name implies, is almost sweet.

The distinctive long, thin, emerald-green string bean, *çalı fasulye*, makes an elegant Istanbul speciality. The single fibrous string that runs along both sides of the flat pod must be removed, then the bean is cut into thin strips and cooked with tomatoes in olive oil.

There are many delicious local varieties of the common bean, too, such as *gelin* (bride) beans from Izmir, or *ferasetsiz* (slow, or lazy) beans from Bursa.

Last but not least, there is *barbunya*, another pole bean, whose pod is a strong pink flecked with white while the seed is white splashed with red. It takes its name from a fish, the equally beautiful and delicious red mullet. In spring the pods may be cooked while still green, before the seeds develop. More commonly, *barbunya* beans are sold ripe, when the shells split to expose beautiful speckled seeds. In season these are cooked right away or frozen; the surplus is left to dry and stored for winter.

Another winter staple is the dried white kidney bean, which grows on low, bushy plants, often without props, and is dried when the seeds are mature. The most common is the cylindrical *horoz fasulye* (literally cockerel bean). But the most sought-after is the large, flat *dermason*, first cultivated in a remote village of that name near Niğde, in central Anatolia, and originally reserved for the palace. Today the term *dermason* is used for large white beans grown anywhere, but they are still pricey. Erzincan in eastern Turkey is said to produce the best.

In the nearby province of Erzurum, the small, roundish, ivory *şeker* beans from İşpir, high above the Black Sea, are unrivalled in taste. Fahri Hüsrev, owner of a legendary roadside restaurant in Çayeli, near the port of Rize, owed his fame to this special variety. Happily, his children have opened branches in more accessible Istanbul and Ankara. It is chefs such as Hüsrev who have made a plate of beans and pilav a much-loved national dish.

Whether they are fresh and full of vitamins, or dried and packed with protein, fibre and complex carbohydrates, beans are little bombs of nutrition, and the perfect comfort food.

Berrin Torolsan, bt@cornucopia.net. For cookery articles from past issues, see cornucopia.net/cookery

Zeytİnyağli Ayşe Kadin Fasulye
Green Beans in Olive Oil and Tomato Sauce

500g fresh green beans
4 tablespoons olive oil
1 large onion (chopped finely)
1 large tomato (peeled and chopped)
Salt and sugar

This is a summer classic in Istanbul, where market stalls and greengrocers' windows are piled high with succulent green beans. If the beans are fresh and tender, it doesn't make much difference which variety you choose. *Ayşe kadın* are ideal, but any haricot bean is fine. Cooked this way they will taste delicious.

Serving undercooked green beans as a side dish may be fashionable in international restaurants, but for this recipe beans should be simmered until the cooking juices reduce to a sauce and the beans are well done, which will enhance the flavour, transforming them from a mere side dish into a delicacy.

1 Top and tail the beans and string if necessary. Rinse and leave to drain.

2 Heat the olive oil in a pan, stir-fry the onion until translucent, add the tomato, and cook, stirring, a little more.

3 Transfer the beans to the pan and stir for another minute or two. Season with salt and sugar and add about half a glass of water. When bubbling, turn down the heat and simmer, covered, until the beans are tender and the juices have reduced.

4 Serve cold, as a starter or, more traditionally, after a hot main course.

Etlİ Ayşe Kadin Fasulye
Green Beans with Lamb

500g fresh green beans
Olive oil or butter
500g boneless shoulder of lamb cut into 4 pieces
1 or 2 tomatoes or tomato paste
Juice and peel of half a lemon
Salt

Another dish that brings summer to mind. It goes well with a bowl of refreshing *cacık* (chilled cucumber, garlic and yoghurt).

1 Top and tail the beans and cut long ones in half; string if necessary.

2 Heat the oil or butter and brown the meat on all sides. Add the tomatoes, chopped, and half a glass of water – if using tomato paste dilute it in this water. Now add the lemon juice and peel. When the liquid comes to the boil, reduce the heat and simmer until the meat is tender. Check often, adding hot water if needed to prevent burning.

3 Discard the lemon peel and season with salt. If the cooking juices have reduced, add more hot water, but sparingly, and transfer the beans to the pan. Leave to cook for another 20 minutes or so until the beans are soft to the bite. Serve without delay.

Kiymali Taze Barbunya
Fresh Barbunya Bean Stew with Minced Beef

1kg fresh barbunya beans in their pods
2 tablespoons butter
1 large onion (chopped)
250g minced beef
1 large tomato (peeled and chopped)
Salt
1 small medium-hot chilli (optional)

Every country has its special beans that are sold fresh in summer and dried for winter. In Turkey, the most distinctive is *barbunya*, with its striking pink pod and mottled seeds, which are similar to Italy's speckled borlotti beans. The pinto or cranberry bean will work very well, too. A chilli pepper will give this dish a hint of piquancy.

1 Shell and rinse the beans briefly.

2 Melt the butter in a pan and sauté the onion. Add the mince and continue stirring until it is browned and crumbly.

3 Transfer the tomato and beans to the pan, along with the chilli if you are using it, and season with salt. Add a glass of water, bring to the boil and cook, covered, over a gentle heat, stirring from time to time, and adding hot water if needed, until the beans are soft but retain their shape.

4 Serve hot with fresh bread and a bowl of refreshing green salad.

Zeytİnyağli Çali Fasulyesİ
Fresh String Beans in Olive Oil and Tomato Sauce

500g string beans
4 tablespoons olive oil
1 large onion (finely chopped)
1 large ripe tomato (peeled and chopped)
Salt and sugar

String beans are usually long and flat with undeveloped seeds. As the name suggests, they are stringy and a bit fiddly to prepare, but the end result is an elegant dish, delicious in spring and at the beginning of summer, when these beans are at their most plentiful and crispest.

1 Remove the string on either side of the bean with a sharp knife, then top and tail. Cut each bean lengthways into thin strips. Rinse and set aside.

2 Heat the olive oil and sauté the onion until soft and golden. Add the tomato to the onion and keep stir-frying until the sauce thickens slightly.

3 Transfer the beans to the sauce and stir gently without breaking them. Season with salt and sugar. Add hot water sparingly, about a third of a glass, and leave to simmer on a low heat for 10-15 minutes.

4 When cooked, leave to cool in the pan. Serve cold as a starter or after a hot main course.

Pİlâkİ
Salad of Beans Braised in Olive Oil

500g shelled beans
4 tablespoons olive oil
1 onion (peeled and chopped)
5–6 garlic cloves (peeled but kept whole)
1 green bell pepper (finely chopped)
1–2 tomatoes (chopped)
Salt and sugar
Fresh parsley to garnish

Several dishes braised or sautéed in olive oil and served cold are called *pilâki*. This *pilâki*, made in summer with fresh or frozen *barbunya*, is traditionally served after the hot main course, but also makes an excellent *meze* to go with rakı – and its flavour improves with time.

In winter this dish can be made with any dried beans, which must first be soaked overnight. Instead of tomatoes and bell peppers, use diced winter root vegetables – carrots, potatoes and celeriac. As in summer, the winter version, with its creamy, melt-in-the-mouth texture, is served cold as a *meze* with a squeeze of lemon.

1 Rinse the beans and set aside.

2 Heat the oil in a heavy pan and fry the onion and garlic cloves until they are translucent. Add the pepper and tomato and continue stirring a little longer. Lastly stir in the beans, season with salt and sugar, add about one glass of cold water and cook, covered, until the beans are meltingly tender.

3 Leave the *pilâki* to cool in the pan. Transfer to a serving plate. Drizzle over a little extra olive oil for an appetising gleam, and garnish with fresh parsley.

Fasulye Piyazi
White Kidney Bean Salad

Dried white beans (soaked overnight)
Wine vinegar
Olive oil
Fresh parsley (chopped)
Onions (sliced finely into half moons)
Salt
Eggs (hard-boiled)
Tomato (halved and sliced)
Black olives
Dried red pepper flakes

Served with fresh rustic bread this excellent salad is a meal in itself, and it does not depend on the seasons. Often the dressing is served separately for people to help themselves. It can be prepared effortlessly with any white beans. Adjust the quantities according to your needs, bearing in mind that dry beans will double in volume when soaked overnight. A pressure cooker saves time.

1 Rinse the soaked beans and cook in plenty of fresh water, until they are soft but still keep their shape. They'll take 45–60 minutes in an ordinary pan, but just 20 minutes in a pressure cooker.

2 With a slotted spoon, drain and transfer the beans to a deep serving plate and leave to cool until needed.

3 When serving, combine the vinegar and olive oil with salt and mix in the onion and parsley. Pour over the beans and toss to make sure they are coated with the dressing.

4 Decorate the top with halves of hard-boiled egg, tomato slices and black olives, and sprinkle with dried red pepper flakes.

Pastirmali Fasulye Yahnisi
Bean Stew with Pastirma

500g dry white beans (soaked overnight)
1 large onion (finely chopped)
2 tablespoons butter
1 tablespoon tomato paste
Salt
Dried red pepper flakes
100g pastırma

Once dismissed as poor man's food, bean stew is much in vogue in modern Turkey. With a bowl of steaming white pilav, this rustic dish makes a warming winter feast. Some noted restaurants, such as Hüsrev, *only* serve beans and pilav. Beans are rich in protein and don't need meat. But minced beef, diced mutton, *sucuk* (spicy sausage) or *pastırma*, a sun-dried cured beef encased in spices, all make tasty additions.

1 Wash and drain the soaked beans and transfer to a pressure cooker. Add the onion, butter, tomato paste, red pepper, salt and enough water to cover, and cook for about 20 minutes. Alternatively, simmer in a conventional pot, which will take much longer; check regularly until the beans are cooked and the juices absorbed.

2 When the beans are tender, add the *pastırma* to the pan and simmer for a further 10 minutes.

3 Serve hot, with rice or bulgur pilav. Accompanied by pickled vegetables, this is a perfectly balanced meal.

Taze Fasulye Turşusu
Pickled Green Beans

Fresh green beans of any kind
Red paprika pepper (optional)
Garlic cloves
Vinegar
Salt

This is a recipe from the 1882 cookery book *Ev kadını* (*The Housewife*), by Fahriye Hanım, who says that any tender, stringless green beans will work. The officer and gourmet Mahmut Nedim bin Tosun, writing in 1898 in *Ahçıbaşı* (*The Chef*), includes cauliflower. Personally, I would add a single fresh paprika pepper for colour. The pickle should be ready in a couple of days.

1 Top, tail and parboil the beans briefly until limp. Wash, deseed and slice the paprika into long thin strips.

2 Pack together into a glass jar.

3 For a dressing, crush the garlic and salt in a bowl, dilute with vinegar and pour over the beans to cover. ◆

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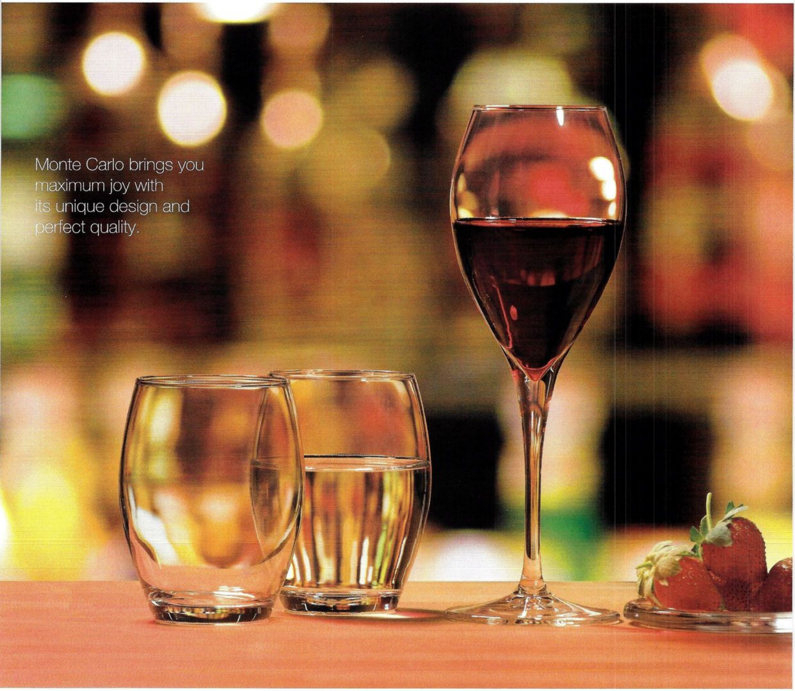

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The best of a classy bunch

In a decade of monitoring Turkey's burgeoning wine industry, Kevin Gould has never been more impressed. He and the Cornucopia tasting team enthusiastically sampled this year's top bottles and nominated their favourites

Now that my eldest son has his first job – on Savile Row, no less – I look at him and think a) how smart he is, b) how lucky I am, and c) how very quickly he has grown up. At a recent tasting of today's Turkish wines, I experienced exactly the same emotions. It seems only months ago that I was moaning about poor quality, inconsistent winemaking, complacent marketing and a sad lack of innovation and verve.

Re-reading my notes, I see that almost a decade has passed, during which there has been a consistently upward trend towards more drinkable, more interesting and more relevant wines. In a tasting of 43 wines there was, inevitably, the odd stinker, but the majority were good or very good, and some wines were downright excellent. Of particular note are two new wineries from Thrace whose wines, especially their whites, are well priced, well presented and utterly wonderful.

Our crack Cornucopia tasting team focused hard (and drank lustily) to bring you this report, which lists our favourites, in the order in which we drank them.

THE CORNUCOPIA SELECTION

WHITE

Amadeus 2011
Tekirdağ, Thrace
Maçka Winery TL75
Sauvignon Blanc

This grape's aromas of exotic fruits can be overpowering and cloying. Made near Tekirdağ, on the northern shore of the Sea of Marmara, Amadeus smells initially as you might expect of a Sauvignon Blanc, but this unoaked wine is balanced by excellent acidity, which means it makes you both smile and long for another sip.

Finesse Gris 2011
Kirklareli, Northern Thrace
Arcadia Winery TL25
Sauvignon Gris/Pinot Gris

Sauvignon Gris is not really known for its heft or for the excitement that it can bring to a wine – it is normally used as a blending grape. Most of us know Pinot Gris better as Pinot Grigio. In Italian hands, Grigio is often lean, sharp and slightly spritzy. But in Arcadia's hands, these two come together in a happy, if unusual, marriage of 80 percent Sauvignon Gris, 20 percent Pinot Gris. This wine tastes of clear, zesty tangerines and drunk by itself it might become wearing, but paired with spicy, strong flavours (I'm thinking of scallops with chilli jam, or perhaps black-pepper crab here), Finesse Gris is a winner.

Voignier 2011
Küçükkarıştıran vineyard, Thrace
Chamlija Winery TL85
Voignier

One of the most exciting winemakers that Turkey has produced in the past decade: a star is born in Mustafa Çamlıca. This wine, which has spent nine months in new French oak, is serious, restrained and sophisticated. Mustafa Bey's daughter is a noted artist, and her colourful work adorns the winery's labels.

Strandja Chardonnay 2011
Strandja vineyard, Thrace
Chamlija Winery TL85
Chardonnay

A posy of chamomile on the nose, and then this fresh, lively, perky wine fairly skips along... and along, and along. A delicious Chardonnay that deftly avoids the fat, flabby butteriness that so many of its namesakes suffer from.

RED

Terra Beyaz 2011
Denizli, Aegean
Kayra Winery TL106
Kalecik Karası

This fruity, easy-going grape is one of the jewels in Turkey's crown. In the wrong hands (or given too little sun) it can produce somewhat tart wines, which is why it's also popular as a blending grape. This undemanding but rewarding wine tastes of warm, soft sunshine.

Anfora 2009
Denizli, Aegean
Sevilen Winery TL67.50
Merlot

Having spent 18–20 months in oak barrels, this big, tough wine seemed hard going at first. But after 15 minutes in the glass it started to soften, revealing itself as an impressive, mouthwatering wine that would stand up well to grilled lamb. Anfora would benefit from being decanted.

Istranca 2011
Strandja vineyard, Thrace
Chamlija Winery TL85
Merlot/Cabernet Sauvignon/Cabernet Franc/ Malbec/ Petit Verdot

This is Mustafa Çamlıca's Bordeaux blend of 40 percent Merlot, 30 percent Cabernet Sauvignon, 14 percent Cabernet Franc, 8 percent Malbec and 8 percent Petit Verdot. And if that all sounds just a bit boring to you, the result most definitely is not. This new wine from a new winemaker is an incredibly assured drop that is not only well-priced but of stellar quality. My sense is that its structure and acidity will allow Istranca to age for a decade or more. Buy it if you see it, or live to regret it.

Evreshe 2010
Gelibolu
Gali Winery TL43
Merlot/Cabernet Sauvignon/Cabernet Franc

This is only the second year of production for this winery. The owner, Hakan Kavur, is an admirer of the *grands vins* of Bordeaux, and has made a concerted effort to produce international-quality wines. The result here is far more interesting than many a mid-range Bordeaux. Get past the early tannins (which will anyway soften with age) to find a glass of delicious, complex unoaked wine that refreshes the palate and excites the mind.

CORNUCOPIA'S RESTAURANT DIRECTORY

Listed online at www.cornucopia.net

Aqua – The Bosphorus, Istanbul

Restaurant with fine Mediterranean cuisine, including Italian and Turkish specialities, in a wing of the new Four Seasons palace building. Outdoor terrace right on the Bosphorus. Seating for 96 inside, 145 outside.

Four Seasons Hotel Istanbul at the Bosphorus
Çırağan Cad No 28, Beşiktaş, Istanbul
Tel 90-212 381 4059 www.fourseasons.com/bosphorus

Equinox – Izmir

A serious restaurant with a seriously magnificent view of Izmir Bay, serving a distinguished modern menu in an elegant, contemporary setting. Private dining for up to 22 people. Open for dinner 7–11pm. Closed on Sundays.

Swissôtel Grand Efes, Izmir
Gaziosmanpaşa Bulvarı No 1, Alsancak, Izmir
Tel 90-232 414 0000 www.swissotel.com

Kantin – Nişantaşı, Istanbul

Nişantaşı's favourite lunchtime spot. A café-restaurant proud of its 'New Istanbul Cuisine', with ingredients fresh from the market. Airy dining room, leafy terrace and a shop selling breads and prepared dishes, with a branch in Bebek.

Akkavak Sok 30, Nişantaşı, Istanbul
Tel 90-212 219 3114 www.kantin.biz

Miyako – Maçka, Istanbul

Healthy Japanese specialities in a serene Japanese garden setting. Sushi bar, teppanyaki grill, à la carte specialities and private Tatami Room within a luxury hotel. Fish and vegetable recipes exclusive to Miyako.

Swissôtel The Bosphorus Istanbul, Maçka, Istanbul
Tel 90-212 326 3305 www.swissotel.com/istanbul

Seasons – Sultanahmet, Istanbul

Turkish cuisine in a spectacular glass pavilion within the serene courtyard of this luxury hotel. Eat indoors or on the terrace. In the shadow of Ayasofya, a sophisticated respite from the bazaars and monuments.

Four Seasons Hotel Istanbul at Sultanahmet
Tevkifhane Sok No 1, Sultanahmet, Istanbul
Tel 90-212 402 3150 www.fourseasons.com/istanbul

Karabatak Café – Karaköy, Istanbul

A local favourite, near Istanbul Modern, serving up perfectly brewed Julius Meinl coffee and treats, in an old metal workshop converted beautifully into a warm, welcoming, bohemian cafe. For seclusion, step upstairs to the library. Monday–Friday 8.30–22.00; Saturday–Sunday 9.30–22.00.

Kara Ali Kaptan Sok No 7, Karaköy.
Tel 90-212 243 6993 www.karabatak.com

Ulus 29 – Ulus, Istanbul

A breathtaking Bosphorus view and a menu full of invention (and the odd Turkish classic) secure the comfortably elegant Ulus 29 a place in the Istanbul pantheon. There's an intelligent cellar and sushi to boot.

Ahmet Saygun Cad, Ulus Park No 1, Ulus, Istanbul
Tel 90-212 358 2929 www.group-29.com

Café Swiss – Maçka Istanbul

Sumptuous open buffet at breakfast, lunch and dinner, as well as à la carte menus on the terrace of Istanbul's luxurious Swissôtel. Sunday brunch highly recommended. Turkish / Swiss cuisine with a fabulous Bosphorus backdrop.

Swissôtel The Bosphorus Istanbul, Maçka, Istanbul
Tel 90-212 326 3305 www.swissotel.com/istanbul

Gali 2010
Gelibolu,
Gali Winery TL35
Merlot/Cabernet Franc

Again, classy winemaking from Gali. Initially the green vanilla of sweet, new oak dominates (it spent four months in new barrels). But wait: lying underneath is a quietly insistent background of minerality that gives Gali interest, and the sense that this wine will continue to develop. Impressive, indeed.

Vourla 2010
Aegean
Urla Winery TL29
Sauvignon/Merlot/Syrah/Boğazkere

By itself, Boğazkere can be a tough drink. But here, in this blend of international varieties it adds interest, depth and structure. This wine is like one of those romantic first dates where you only get to hold hands, but each moment is a thrill. A teasing, romantic number that grabs and keeps your interest with the promise of more to come. One for the winter months and a good book.

Mahrem Tannat 2010
Urla, Aegean
Mozaik Winery TL28.90
Tannat

If you've ever tasted a Madiran wine from the French Basque country, you've tasted the Tannat grape. Madirans are powerful, robust (often rather chewy) wines that age well. Mozaik have given this 18 months of (French and American) oak, but while I wasn't really aware of distinctively different oaky flavours in the glass, I did encounter a wine that's a great quaffer, the kind of unpretentious *vin de pays* that you feel is a real find.

Cru Turk 2006
Bozcaada (Tenedos), Aegean
Corvus Winery TL30
Cabernet Sauvignon/Merlot/Syrah/ Cabernet Franc

This daddy balances power, finesse, fruit and length. Given time in a decanter and then in the glass, its aromas progress from woods and salty winds through to warm, toasted spices – allspice and cinnamon especially. Every mouthful seems to reveal new flavours and nuances. It's no surprise Cru Turk wins so many international awards. A stupendous, narcotic wine. ◆

Special thanks to Taner Öğütoğlu of Wines of Turkey for calling in these wines for us to taste. www.winesofturkey.com

Kevin Gould is a cook, writer and traveller. He is writing a biography of Chateau Musar; realfood@dishy.net. He flew to Istanbul from London Stansted by Pegasus Airlines. Return fares from £100

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Village voices

On a summer visit to the city, Azize Ethem cannot resist a ferry trip to Kadıköy, on the Asian shore, with its historic streets, enticing shops and markets – and memories of her late husband Selim's tall tales and sweet tooth. Back home by the lake, it's time to make ready for winter

This summer I spent a week with friends in Beyoğlu. A trip to the city always involves a visit to Kadıköy on the Asian shore. A public ferry from the Eminönü pier is the cheapest scenic tour one can get, with views of historical sites to left and right. As you approach the Kadıköy docks, the Haydarpaşa train station comes into view, perched on a thousand long wooden piles sunk into the swampy foreshore. The station, gifted over a hundred years ago to the sultan by Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany, was designed by German architects and built by German and Italian craftsmen using textured sandstone on the outer walls, while the interior is adorned with trailing leafy cartouches, garlands and stained glass.

This castle-like Neoclassical building was the terminus for the Istanbul–Medina–Damascus railway line and a transfer station for the famed Orient Express. It was a link to the Hejaz railway, shortening the arduous journey for pilgrims by over a month. First World War Turkish troops heading for the Eastern Front embarked here.

With the construction of the highways, Haydarpaşa Station lost its significance, and it is now undergoing restoration following a serious fire in 2010. Various plans for the future of this iconic building are being hotly debated, with a passionate lobby intent on ensuring an appropriate use is found.

My husband, Selim, was the master of tall tales. The difficulty was that more often than not the most improbable turned out to be true. He excelled at telling a story which was 99 percent correct, with a tiny fib embedded in it. In the early 1980s, on a visit with the children to Istanbul, we spied the blackened, burnt-out wreck of a tanker. When Sara asked Selim about it he explained that a few years earlier two ships had collided at the entrance to the Bosphorus. The enormous explosion broke windows for miles around, including the stained-glass windows of Haydarpaşa Station. Within days a meeting of important people convened at the station to discuss their repair. During the meeting a janitor repeatedly poked his head around the door, trying to get the chairman's attention. Rolling his eyes, the exasperated officer eventually asked what he wanted, only to be told there was a complete spare set in the basement.

Search engines give me the names of the vessels involved and details of the 94,000 tonnes of oil which burned and caused a devastating oil slick. There is no mention of a second set of windows. Never mind, search engines don't know everything and this is one of Selim's stories I choose to believe.

When Selim's grandparents returned from exile in Tripoli, Lebanon, they chose to live in Üst Bostancı, where Selim grew up. Kadıköy was, and still is, the place to shop, lunch and meet friends. This area is historically older than most of the European side of Istanbul, with artefacts dating back over 7,000 years. Kadıköy was settled by Greeks from Attica before the founding of Byzantium. Originally named Chalcedon, it repeatedly changed hands until it came under Ottoman control in 1353, a century before the fall of Constantinople.

The cultural heart of the Asian shore, Kadıköy's bars, restaurants, cinemas, bookshops and opera house cater to the locals. For leather, carpet or tourist trinket shops, one is on the wrong side of the Bosphorus. The art-supply shop is the best I have seen anywhere and is on Sara's "must do" list every time she visits from London. Selim could disappear into the narrow back lanes for hours, but a visit to the Hacı Bekir confectionery shop was always top of his list. Famed for its *lokum* (Turkish delight) and marzipan, the business was established in 1777; today the fifth generation of the family carries on the tradition. There are long-established delicatessens with wonderful arrays of cheeses, salami, delicious olives, caviar and other gourmet goodies. The fruit and vegetable stalls have a dazzling array of Turkish and imported produce, examined by well-dressed housewives with the intensity of one selecting diamonds or pearls.

> *'The fruit and vegetable stalls have a dazzling array of produce, examined by well-dressed housewives with the intensity of one selecting diamonds or pearls'*

The fish-market stalls display gleaming trays of fresh fish creatively arranged on beds of crushed ice. On previous visits I'd always seen a well-fed goose wandering between the counters. Owned by one of the fishmongers, it was employed to guard the fish from the numerous stray cats intent on a free meal. Whether it was his day off or he has moved on to goose heaven I don't know. Perhaps the large statue of a goose on the foreshore was created in his memory. I am sure if Selim was here he could clarify it for me.

Behind the fish market are antique shops full of tat as well as treasures. Sanatçılar Sokak is the artists' lane, where paintings and ceramics range from wonderful to decidedly less than accomplished.

A hundred years before Fatih Mehmed II conquered Constantinople, the first Ottoman mosque in the area was built in Kadıköy. Along with the mosques are Armenian, Greek, Serbian, Catholic and Protestant churches. In 1899 the Greek community strenuously protested the building of a synagogue on land they wanted for a church. The argument was only resolved when Abdülhamid II sent soldiers to settle the matter. Today the Hemdat Israel Synagogue stands on the site, its Hebrew name reflecting the Jewish community's gratitude to the sultan.

There is the Florence Nightingale Museum in the Selimiye Army Barracks, and the Haydarpaşa Cemetery with the graves of over 6,000 British soldiers who died in the Crimean War. The non-touristy hamams, historical buildings and monuments cannot all be explored in one day, but at least one can get a taste of the Asian side of the city.

Back home on the edge of the lake, temperatures fall as autumn approaches. The kitchen wood stove will heat the radiators throughout the house, and the logs have been sawn and stacked ready. The olive crop looks promising and the freezer is filled with surplus produce from the garden. I ate all the figs straight from the tree, so fig jam is a no-go this year. Tomorrow I will pick the apples and make a squillion apple pies. The season's third bean crop is almost ready, and Mehmet plans to grow broccoli over the winter. With the price of petrol, the chore of trips to fill the fuel cans and the noise of the petrol pump, I will take the plunge and buy an electric motor. Next week my friend John arrives to help me install a new pump and assist with glamorous chores such as playing chimney sweep. The leaking roof has been repaired and my nasty little plastic boat hauled out of the water. The storks, egrets and herons, along with the hoopoes and kingfishers, have left for warmer climes.

It is almost time to settle down in front of the fire with my Kindle and read all those classics I should have read years ago. ◆

Azize Ethem is the author of 'Beyond the Orchard' (Çitlembik), available from cornucopia.net at £9.99

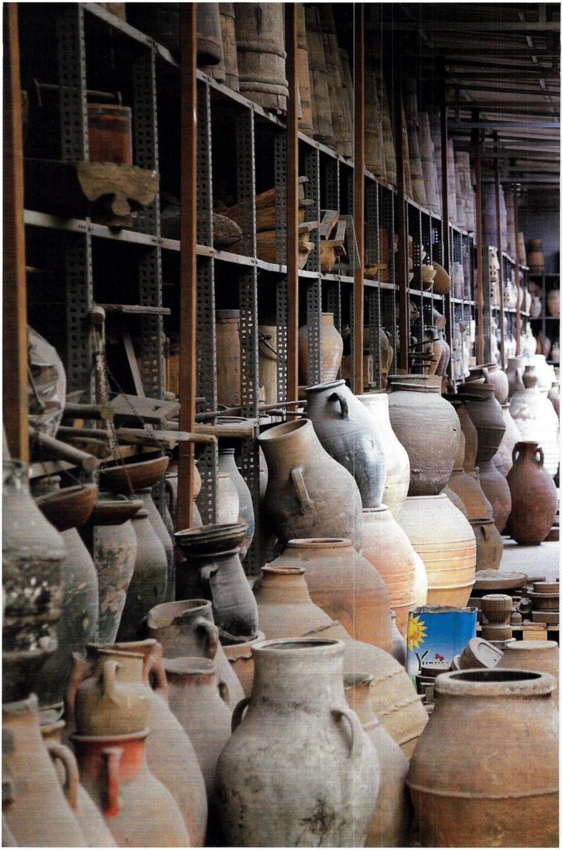
URNS TO YEARN FOR

DEEP IN THE INDUSTRIAL OUTSKIRTS OF ISTANBUL, GRISELDA WARR ENTERS AN ALADDIN'S CAVE OF ANATOLIAN TREASURES. PHOTOGRAPHS BY FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG

A warehouse heaves with pottery jars and pitchers of all sizes, with battered cauldrons, wooden cartwheels, marble basins, copper serving dishes stacked to the ceiling. I had no idea such places existed. We are in the nondescript building in Beylikdüzü, beyond Istanbul's Atatürk airport, where three members of the Doyran family, from Nevşehir in Cappadocia, run their business, Hakart.

In a basement workshop they reproduce examples of classic Turkish house and garden wares, from trays and tea services to spinning wheels and pitchforks, using traditional tools. But climb the stairs and you enter a different world. Cavernous spaces over four floors are filled with a wild assortment of old treasures that the Doyrans continue to find in Anatolia, and in the lands beyond the Black Sea.

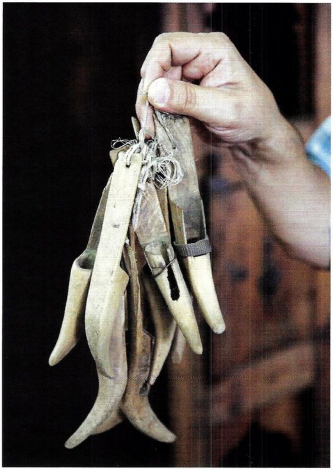
Pottery urns, jars and amphorae fill one immense back room. Giant wooden casks are ranged on upper shelves. Part of the fun lies in discovering curiosities in dark corners. Would the keys in fat bunches fit any of the dusty locks piled



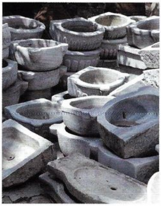
AN ANNEXE FOR THE POTS IN HAKART'S ASTONISHING TREASURE TROVE – A SORT OF GIANT ANATOLIAN CLEARING HOUSE

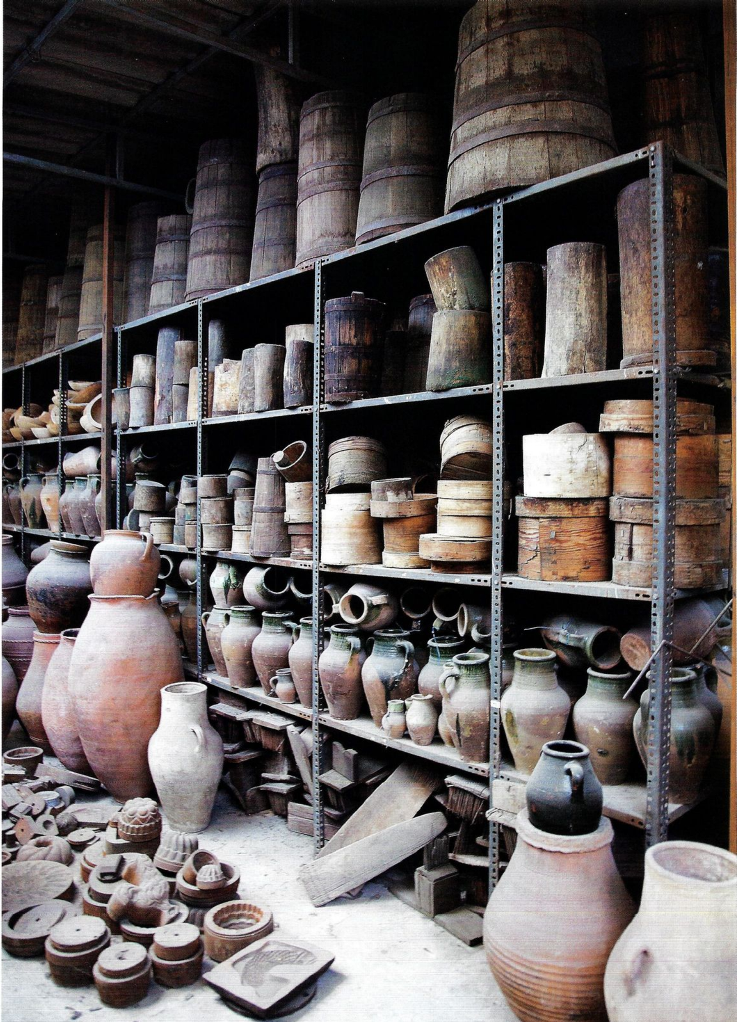
next to them? An ingenious glove-like wooden implement designed to winnow grain would make a brilliant dance prop. A brass "hand" has holes in its numerous "fingertips", for pouring the batter for the parchment-thin pastry *tel kadayıf*. One brass cauldron large enough for a child to bathe in would be impressive enough. But a tumbling stack of 20 or more, with intricately shaped handles, could be a stage set for experimental theatre.

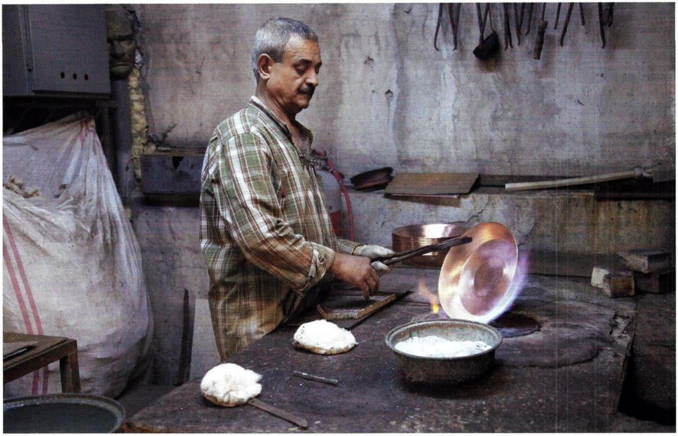
There is something forlorn about shelf upon shelf of covered brass and bronze dishes once used for serving rice and other foods: it seems a shame that so many have been discarded. Here, too, are *sini*, the flat, round trays that double as impromptu tables. Then there are the legions of jugs – one ornamental pair stands shoulder-height. Five-foot-tall anthropomorphic copper stills for rose oil, sleek and

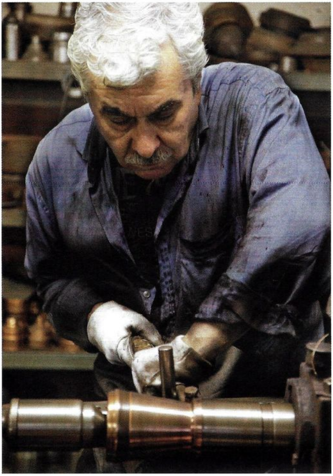


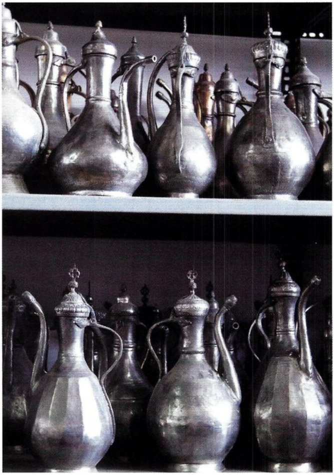
TOP THE DOYRANS OF HAKART EVEN HOARD OLD WOODEN CARTWHEELS LIKE THESE
ABOVE ALL KEYED UP
RIGHT A STASH OF MARBLE BASINS, SOME FROM OLD LAUNDRIES, AND OTHERS, WITH PROTRUSIONS FOR SOAP, FROM ABANDONED HAMAMS. EVERY MANSION HAD ITS OWN
FAR RIGHT LONG WOODEN 'FINGERS' HELD TOGETHER WITH STRING FORM A GLOVE THAT TURNS THE HAND INTO AN EFFECTIVE WINNOWING TOOL
OPPOSITE A PROFUSION OF POTS, AMPHORAE AND BAKING MOULDS











beautifully made, look down their long "noses" upon lesser artefacts on lower shelves.

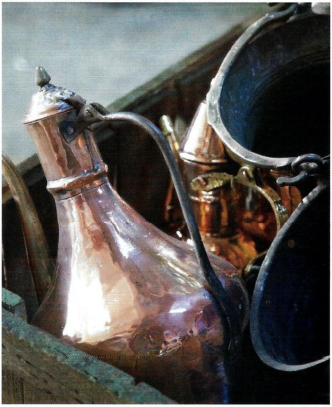
Yes, I know all this used to be available in Copper Street outside the Grand Bazaar, but those days are gone. And if it were not for the Doyrans, so would this great wealth of the antique, weird and wonderful. ◆

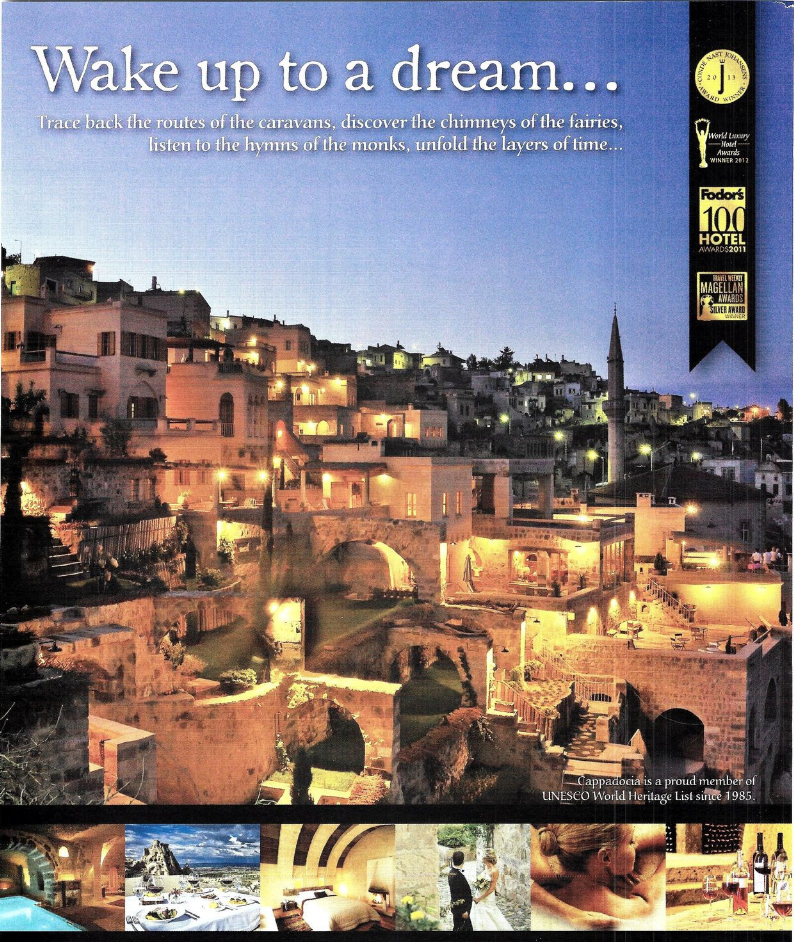
❋ *Hakart, Menekşe Cad 3, Bakırcılar ve Pirinççiler Sanayi Sitesi (the Copper- and Brass-makers' Industrial Park), Beylikdüzü, Istanbul; hakart.com.tr; +90 212 876 2686. Take the Metrobüs to Güzelyurt. Hakart have a small shop by the Grand Bazaar: Bakırcılar Cad 26, Beyazıt. Prices for ewers: TL75–150. Clay jars: from TL10, for tiny vessels, to TL5,000 for large. Marble basins: TL75–200*

❋ *Also worth seeing in this truly bleak area is Büyükçekmece Bridge, the only building to bear Sinan's signature. Beyond lie the vineyards of Thrace and fine Edirne mosques*

❋ *On the return journey call in at Atatürk's summerhouse in Florya, an immaculate Thirties time warp on stilts in the Sea of Marmara. A good lunch spot is Beyti, also in Florya (see Restaurants, page 201)*

LEFT LARGE ROUND TINNED-COPPER TRAYS LIKE THESE COULD BE SET ON WOODEN LEGS TO SERVE AS ATTRACTIVE TABLES
BELOW GIANT COPPER STILLS STARE DOWN AT THE COLLECTION
BOTTOM ROW AND OPPOSITE TRADITIONAL COPPER- AND BRASS-WORKING TECHNIQUES ARE STILL USED AT HAKART BY MORE THAN 50 SKILLED CRAFTSMEN BROUGHT UP IN THE OLD APPRENTICESHIP TRADITION. EACH PROVINCE HAS ITS OWN DISTINCTIVE EWER DESIGN

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Istanbul on a plate

From shish to swish. *Andrew Finkel* takes a seat at some top tables

Upstairs in the Spice Bazaar, Pandeli offers an elegant retreat from the crowds

If you are exploring the historically important neighbourhoods of Istanbul then you expect to get an equally interesting meal. But it's more of a problem than it might appear. The Turkish way of defining it is "rakı and shish kebab"– ie the streets surrounding major tourist attractions spawn restaurants which (no surprise) cater to tourists, or at the very least provide fare that outsiders think they want to eat, rather than Turkish cuisine as it can or ought to be.

If you visit the Grand Bazaar you know you'll be treated as a tourist, with all the good-humoured but combative rituals that involves – which may explain why few actual residents of the city would consider travelling into the Old City for a special night out. Restaurants thrive on an established clientele, and whereas the couple at the next table might send off a testimonial to Trip Advisor before heading back to Melbourne, it may be a long time before they themselves return.

Lunch table tactics

One way around the problem begins at lunch. The historic peninsula fills up with businessmen, craftsmen and traders during the day. Sultanahmet has its share of tourist buses but also government offices, and even people who work in the Grand Bazaar have to eat. These are transients of a different category – commuters who go home at night. The more savvy head for any number of small restaurants that may not have an extensive menu but do one or two things well. A good example is the Historic Sultanahmet Meatball Seller (**Tarihi Sultanahmet Köfteci**), aka Selim Usta's, near Ayasofya on the Divan Yolu, the road leading to the Grand Bazaar. It serves grilled meatballs, a salad of beans, a pudding of buttery, sweetened semolina, and little else. But prices are reasonable, the food delicious and the narrow restaurant's many floors are always packed.

There are pleasant enough places in the Grand Bazaar itself, oriental and atmospheric and that little bit overpriced. **Havuzbaşı** is a bazaar-goers' favourite and **Şark Kavhesi** (Orient Café) is a fine place to have a coffee and rest your feet. But if you can find the steps up to **Can Lokantası** (off the main Goldsmith's drag or Kalpakcılar Caddesi), you discover a plain tiled room with excellent food. The menu rotates but there is a meat broth thickened with egg and lemon: a sharp, savoury taste which if I close my eyes, I still recall from the first time I ate it 20 years ago.

Happily, too, there's a blog: **istanbuleats.com** (*Istanbul Eats* in book form), which specialises in locating what is original and (dare I say) authentic. The only warning is that most of the places that are one step up from street food don't serve alcohol. I wouldn't use it to book a 50th-anniversary meal, but it keeps a weather eye on the genre restaurant – where the stuffed flatbreads (*pide*) are crisper, the grilled liver juicier, and the döner kebab worth the detour.

The other culinary strategy is to go with the flow and accept being a tourist with grace. **Konyalı**, inside Topkapı Palace, is an overpriced treat and not nearly as good as its sister restaurant in the Kanyon shopping mall in the Levent business district, but it has one of the most spectacular views in the city and, if you accept its limitations, is unlikely to disappoint. The cafeteria nearby, on the other hand, has no virtue other than that it saves you having to leave the palace if you missed out on breakfast.

Recently I would have found it hard to recommend **Pandeli** despite its elegant setting, upstairs inside the Spice Bazaar, but I have just had a glowing report from the food writer Aylin Tan, who rates it as one of the 101 restaurants you have to visit before you die.

I have always been a fan of **Hamdi**, nearby, but it seems that standards sometimes slip. This is one of the first restaurants to bring southeastern hand-minced kebabs to Istanbul. It has long graduated from modest premises to a multi-storey complex that caters to foreign tours. However, the meze are usually excellent and the meat – be it peppered with green pistachio or with poppy seeds – has long set the standard.

Mad about the grill

The word "kebab" (rather like the Inuit for snow) refers to a wide range of (in this case) grilled meat. The meat at **Beyti** is simply cooked in the Balkan style, which means mildly seasoned. It is an Istanbul institution, founded by Beyti Güler, whose parents' kitchen grew into a modest eatery, then a grand establishment in Florya, near the airport, frequented by statesmen and starlets. The döner is outstanding, but everything is good – the fare closer to an American chop house than the seasoned kebabs from the Turkish southeast.

OLDE OTTOMAN?

Common sense will warn against anywhere advertising "Ottoman cuisine" – like "olde English pub" – but a few restaurants have taken the trouble to research historical recipes and palace records. **Asitane,** next to the Kariye Museum, was the first, and this gave birth to the rival **Matbah** in Sultanahmet. In both places the food is carefully presented and they serve dishes – including goose – which just don't appear on other menus. Many dishes are not strikingly different from the standard repertoire but strike a distinctive note with the use of a few unexpected ingredients. There are "New World" tomatoes and fruit, and even honey, to provide notes of sweet and sour.

Nar, on the top floor of the Armaggan craft and design centre in Nurosmaniye, by the Grand Bazaar, aims to showcase Turkish cuisine, highlighting regional dishes and seasonal or unusual produce. It sports a good wine list from the new crop of quality Turkish producers.

SULTANAHMET SUPPERS

There are bright spots scattered around Sultanahmet – places that might appear to be just what a visitor might want to avoid but where the food is carefully done and the staff attentive.

My favourite is **Ahırkapı Balıkçısı** (the Stable Gate Fisherman), a hole in the wall separated from the tourist terrain of Sultanahmet's Akbıyık Street by the railway. The view is of a quiet cobbled street, the meze simple, the fish fresh, and if you show up unannounced there is a good chance the handful of tables will be booked. But all is perfect and far more relaxed than the fancier and perfectly good **Balıkçı Sebahattin,** a fully fledged Bosphorus-style fish restaurant in the same neighbourhood.

At the far end of the scale is **Seasons,** the dining room of the eponymous Four Seasons Hotel, which has a Turkish-tinged menu of international cuisine.

Many of the other Sultanahmet Hotels offer a comfortable place to relax, if not excellent food. The boutique **Empress Zoe Hotel** has a secret garden next to the ruins of an old bath-house – the perfect setting for a quiet drink. The courtyard of the **Yeşil Ev** provides similar refuge. The **Armada Hotel** has a terrace with views and decent food. The Armada now owns **Karışma Sen** (literally "mind your own business"), a meyhane on the fringes of the Kumpkapı restaurant district and now a slightly gentrified version of its former self.

THE PICK OF THE PENINSULA

There are similar gems scattered around the old peninsula. There is interesting food (but no alcohol) at the **Akdeniz Hatay Sofrası** (the Mediterranean Hatay Table), an unfussy barn of a place at the start of Vatan Caddesi, a place you might travel through but not go to. It specialises in the food from Turkey's Syrian border, all spicy and flavoursome.

I have yet to find an exceptional meyhane among the gaggle of restaurants in the square at the heart of Samatya, by the Marmara coast road (the excellent **Safa** in nearby Yedikule is reviewed on the following pages). The square is like an Italian piazza, where the streets converge on a space that suddenly opens out. This has become an informal dining hub for Istanbul urbanites trying to avoid the chichi restaurant scenes elsewhere. The atmosphere (and possibly the rakı) is the real attraction. The original of the **Develi** chain of kebab restaurants is also in Samatya Square, but here the problem is just the opposite. The kebabs are tasty; the atmosphere a bit stuffy.

AVENUES OF PLENTY

I am only mildly enthusiastic about *buryan* kebab – the Turkish equivalent of a slow-cooked lamb tandoori without the spice, apart from an afterthought of sprinkled dried thyme. There is a pedestrian (alcohol-free) zone in the Kadınlar Pazarı (Women's Market) by the Valens Aqueduct, along with shops that sell produce from Siirt in eastern Turkey. **Şeref Buryan** is the hot favourite and serves another Siirt speciality: rice with chicken and almonds baked in a pastry casing. It's fine comfort food, but the place is not much more atmospheric than the average McDonald's.

There is another restaurant alley behind Sirkeci Station where you can get döner kebab cut vertically at **Kasap (Butcher) Osman,** and a variant (or perhaps the granddaddy) of döner kebab cut horizontally at **Şehzade Erzurum Çağ Kebabı,** where the meat is skewered and sliced.

An even more unusual restaurant district is Sütlüce, at the top of the Golden Horn. The large abattoir has long since moved away but its high-cholesterol legacy remains in the form of an avenue of places specialising in grilled sweetbreads. These range from the street seller who packs a piece of crusty bread from his open-air brazier beside the new conference centre to the mid-range **Sadrazam Mahmut,** where there are lamb chops or meatballs for the squeamish and the beer is cold. **Umur** also fits that bill. **Sadrazam Kemal,** by contrast, is a proper restaurant with a range of meze and a broader menu. Sweetbread come in two varieties – the thymus or the pancreas. One is small and nutlike, the other more richly textured, like brain. It is a mild taste, worth acquiring, and not necessarily one of offal (I speak as one who loves liver, is indifferent to kidney and will never again eat spleen).

MUSEUMS OF GOOD TASTE

You don't have to eat entrails on the Golden Horn. Downstream is the Rahmi M Koç Museum. Specialising in the history of industry and technology, it also sports a surprising variety of places to eat – including an English pub (the archly titled **Bar Bar Rossa**) and a Coca-Cola snack bar operating from the back of a 1934 Dodge truck. There are two good restaurants: **Halat,** which serves Mediterranean food and has a terrace with views of the museum's open-air displays; and **Café du Levant,** a painstakingly re-created Parisian brasserie.

Zeyrekhane, on the Old City side of the inlet, owned by the same people, is in what feels to be the garden of the 12th-century Pantokrator monastic complex (that became the Zeyrek Mosque after the 1453 conquest) and occupies a splendid terrace with views up and down the Golden Horn. The menu is geared towards Turkish favourites like baked lamb and *böreks.*

THE BUSINESS OF DINING

Karaköy, squeezed between Golden Horn and the entrance to the Bosphorus, an easy ride by tram from the Old City, is a business district in the process of transformation as the art galleries of Beyoğlu spill down. It is a return to gastronomic *terra cognita,* with a busy mix of luncheon counters, cafés and upscale diners.

Karaköy Lokantası is a mixture – prepared Turkish dishes by day, good meyhane food by night – marred only by the otherwise attractive turquoise tiled walls which reflect the noise. Next door is **Lokanta Maya,** a smart little restaurant offering an Aegean-inspired cuisine with a lighter menu for lunch.

The old Ottoman Bank, now converted into the SALT gallery and library, also sports **Ca D'Oro,** which serves Venetian-oriented cuisine. Another museum restaurant, at **Istanbul Modern,** on the Tophane fringe of Karaköy, is run by the Borsa chain. There is a balcony with excellent views (provided no cruise liner is parked in front) and a dinner menu after the museum has closed.

On the way to the gallery at Tophane is **Fasuli,** which reflects Istanbul's current obsession with finding the perfectly cooked bean. The same simple fare is on offer at **Kanaat,** a hole in the wall opposite the Süleymaniye, located in the 16th-century foundation buildings of the mosque. There is no better place to meditate on the transience of monumental imperial religious architecture faced with the eternity embodied in a well-cooked bean.

Karaköy boasts its very own **Starbucks** where the ferries dock, but there are far trendier cafés in among its streets, including **Karabatak,** where the menu is limited but the WiFi not. And when all is done there is time for the ultimate Turkish treat – a crispy piece of pistachio or walnut baklava at **Karaköy Güllüoğlu,** as formidable an establishment as the Blue Mosque. ◆

Andrew Finkel is the author of Turkey: What Everyone Needs to Know (OUP), available from cornucopia.net at £10.95

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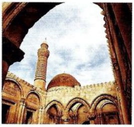

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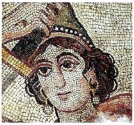

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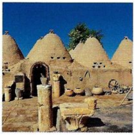

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FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG

Abdullah Alikoç (right) in his Rumeli Lokantası at İlyasbey Caddesi 123, Yekikule, with chef Salim

SLEEPLESS IN STAMBOUL

Are nights of raki-fuelled conviviality a thing of the past, or is there life in the old meyhane yet?

The following are a few suggestions for old-style dining in Istanbul from an impecunious scholar friend who enjoys a night out without paying through the nose – or being "put through the nose", as the evocative Turkish phrase has it. Our friend protested that the general profile of a reader of Cornucopia doesn't fit that of a denizen of these places, but we twisted his nose until he gave in. After all, the kind of dining experience they offer is fast disappearing.

The days of the *koltuk meyhane* in Istanbul – small eateries where shopkeepers would stop after work for a few meze and rakıs before the trek home – are long gone, but a sense of the routine and ordinariness that combines (largely male) friendship with food and drink on a regular basis remains in a few neighbourhood places. The food is great, don't get us wrong, but the camaraderie is too: you can have spirited conversations with owners, waiters and fellow customers alike about all manner of things. But be sure to check that there's no football on TV the night you go – at those times the camaraderie trumps everything else in the house.

Another warning: as in most restaurants in Anatolia, despite the signs on the wall, smoking is largely tolerated in these meyhane. In fine weather sit outside, or near an open window or door. It goes without saying that all the establishments listed below have liquor licences. Depending on what meze and main course you eat, how much you drink, and how much of a regular you are, prices start at TL50 and head north, but you have to be seriously hungry and thirsty to spend more than TL100

BERRIN TOROLSAN

MEYYHANES MAY BE DWINDLING, AND PRICES SOARING, BUT TURKEY'S NATIONAL DRINK IS AS POPULAR AS EVER

per person. Note: if you want live music, go elsewhere, though you might hear spontaneous vocalising later in the evening, especially if the match turns out the right way.

MEYHANE

HÜSEYİN'İN YERİ

Vodina Cad 119, Balat
+90 212 525 3251

On fine nights the fourth-floor terrace is open, with views across tiled rooftops to the distant Galata Tower, seagulls, and the neon lights of tea houses at the edge of Çarşamba. Owners are fourth-generation Georgian-Turkish from the Black Sea, so bring your Georgian friends. If you don't ask for the delicious hot spinach-and-egg starter, they'll bring it anyway.

KULELİ

Büyük Kuleli Sok 32, Samatya
+90 212 587 9428

Included here largely for its location on Samatya Square, one of the last great unspoilt public squares (despite Develi) in the Old City. After dinner, go out for a *cila* (polish) at one of the beer joints either in the square or on the main drag. I was there a few months ago with friends. In the wee hours, we were singing old songs with the neighbourhood codgers when a BMW pulled up, a well-dressed fortysomething woman jumped out, and, waving an imaginary conductor's baton, sang along until the traffic piled up behind and the honking of horns swelled. At which point she jumped back in and drove off. Just another evening in Samatya.

SAFA

İlyasbey Cad 121, Yedikule
+90 212 585 5594

Or start out the evening at Safa, where the food is better than at Kuleli, and the regulars mix easily with a yuppie crowd at weekends. Then walk (10 mins) through the back streets of Yedikule to Samatya to polish things off. Unusually, Safa does not allow smoking inside. In the summer the fish supply dries up, but the garden is open for smokers. Favourite meze include old-style *çiroz* with plenty of dill, brain, *lakerda* (cured bonito, and aubergine with yoghurt). If you arrive early you'll find the owner in a corner, with his rakı and a plate of something, judiciously measuring out the evening sip by sip, bite by bite. Yuppies bring business (and youth, and female customers) but also slightly higher prices. Thanks to its location near the coast road to Yeşilköy, this is a great place to seek solace if you missed your plane at Atatürk Airport, as I once did. Safa is also a perfect hangout after a Saturday tour of local churches and the Yedikule fortress. Best to book at weekends.

ASTEK

Bilezikçi Sok, Kurtuluş
+90 212 225 0079

The waiters (both named Mehmet), the owner, chef and other customers will treat you like a regular on your second visit, remembering where you like to sit, what you like to eat and which team you root for. Astek has quite a middle-class clientele, but couples tend to flee on match nights. The meze are the big attraction at Astek, although last winter I ate the best *hamsi tava* (fried anchovies dredged in cornmeal) I have *ever* had in Istanbul here. Tetchy about smoking? Sit near the door. Astek is a two-minute walk from the Osmanbey metro, a great argument for that extra glass or two to polish off the meal. Open Sundays. Call up and book at weekends.

OCAKBAŞI

Having read this far you will have noticed that *none* of the meyhane recommended are in Beyoğlu, where rents send prices soaring and service is often lacking. By contrast, it still has two excellent *ocakbaşı* (along with others that are not so hot).

The *ocakbaşı* is a restaurant that specialises in things grilled: the name literally means "by the grill" or "head of the hearth"– on a cold night there is nothing better than sitting around the open charcoal grill, watching the grillmeister work his magic, and then consuming an offering, wrapped in thin pieces of hot *lavaş* bread. Red meat is the first thing that comes to mind, but of course there is also chicken, and glorious charred peppers, onion, aubergines, tomatoes (and garlic cloves, if you ask for them).

In fact a main difference between the meyhane and the *ocakbaşı* is that the delicious meze, such as *ezme* (a spicy tomato dip) and an aubergine dip, are not prepared ahead of time, but made fresh. (As traditions change, and people confuse traditions, many *ocakbaşı* have started stocking meyhane-style meze – these are generally to be avoided.)

PALA

Kalyoncu Kulluğu Cad 17, Balıkpazarı +90 212 249 0470

The granddaddy of them all. One of the last places in Beyoğlu run by people who know how to treat customers – whether solitary, convivial, foreign, it doesn't matter. Food is never pressed on you. Recommendations are always sound. And the meat and meze are excellent. I go there regularly with a vegetarian, who chows down on grilled vegetables, freshly prepared spreads, *lavaş* and other breads.

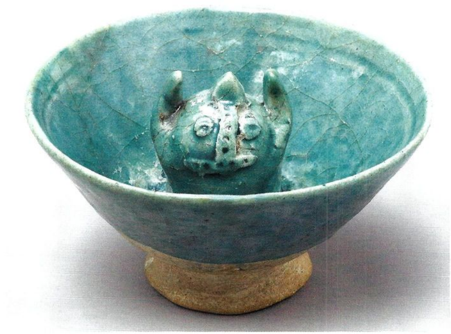
KİRVEM

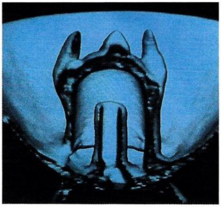
Kurabiye Sok 22, Taksim
+90 212 243 0778

Although I have a friend who grew up in Tarsus and swears by the Adana kebabı at Zübeyir, just across the street from it is my other favourite Beyoğlu *ocakbaşı*, Kirvem. It is run by İbrahim, the son of the founder. If the photos on the wall are any guide, Kirvem was a happening place during the heyday of the Yeşilçam movie industry – İbrahim's dad can be seen in photographs hobnobbing with musicians and other artistes from the 1970s. Go during the week and you can get a seat at the grill, watch your food being prepared, rubbing elbows with couples out on a date or friends settling in for a night of it. ◆

A devilishly fine juicer

John Carswell solves the mystery of the 'lemon squeezer' that wasn't





Top A Seljuk 'squeezer' withdrawn from auction when its significance came to light. But was the devilish boss at the centre really for juicing lemons? Above An x-ray reveals the ingenious hydraulics, first observed in the 8th century, and still used by Kütahya ceramicists a thousand years later Above right The base of the squeezer

A couple of years ago at a preview of an Islamic sale at Bonhams, I spied an object on the floor of a vitrine. It seemed familiar, and could it be...? Closer inspection revealed that, yes, it appeared to be a lemon-squeezer, but 400 years earlier than those made by Armenian potters at Kütahya in the early 18th century.

The same size as its successors, it had a boss at the centre and a hole drilled in the base. What was different was that instead of the usual facets, the boss had a head with two protuberant eyes and horns, looking rather like the devil incarnate. Apart from its evil appearance, the horns had a practical function, which was to scour the lemon.

When its unique qualities were pointed out to the owner, Martin Snowdon, he withdrew it from the sale, and I am indebted to him for allowing it to be studied in more detail. What is fascinating is the length of time between the Seljuk example and its reappearance in the lemon-squeezers at Kütahya 600 years later, both of which are based on the same technology. In turn, this can be traced back to a series of Islamic medieval acquamaniles, the earliest of which is dated 796/7 and the latest from Khorosan dated 1206. The hydraulic principle continues in medieval European acquamaniles, of which the Nuremberg lion, c1400, is a splendid example.

The humble pottery lemon-squeezers might seem insignificant compared to their bronze ancestors, but they have their own special interest as the survival of an ingenious idea. As with the later Kütahya examples, the only way to ascertain that the principle was the same was to x-ray the Seljuk squeezer. This was accomplished by the Department of Radiology at the Chelsea and Westminster Hospital in London. The result showed there was an identical central cylinder within the boss. So far, so good.

This led in turn to other questions, such as what was it used for, and what was its function? Up until this point I had assumed it was to produce a quantity of lemon juice, but for what purpose? Lemon juice was certainly used in Islamic cookery in the medieval period, but in Persia a much more important commodity was pomegranate juice. Pomegranates were commended several times by the Prophet Mohammed in the Koran (*surat l-an'am*). In a unique Chinese treatise of AD1330 (Yin-Shan Cheng-Ya, *A Soup for the Qan*, London, 2000), pomegranates are mentioned many times, particularly as of Western origin, for the manufacture of a syrup to be diluted and drunk, and in cooking as an ingredient of *mudaqqaqat hamida*, a stew of meatballs, herbs and condiments. To bring things up to date, pomegranate syrup is an essential ingredient of *fesenjan*, a tart stew of chicken and walnuts, in Iran today.

To return to the "Seljuk lemon-squeezer" in light of the above, it should now be relabelled as a Persian pomegranate-squeezer. Those devilish horns would be ideal for separating the seeds from the pith. ◆

John Carswell's latest book, 'Mantai: City by the Sea', co-edited with Siran Deraniyagala and Alan Graham (Linden Soft, £56), records excavations in Sri Lanka between 1980 and 1984 and is available from cornucopia.net

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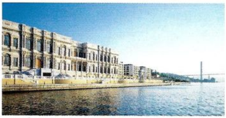

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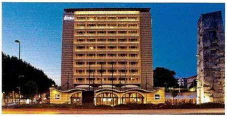

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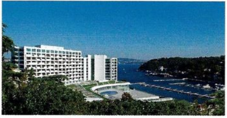

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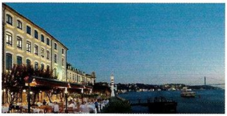
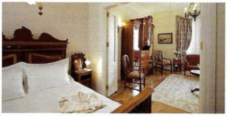


The Sumahan on the Water

A launch whisks you across the water to Europe when you stay on the Asian shore at the Sumahan. An inspired conversion of an Ottoman distillery by husband-and-wife architects who inherited it with wonderful views of the Old City. Çengelköy, a village that kept its old Bosphorus charm, is a short stroll. The hotel has a hamam and a brand-new seaside restaurant.

www.sumahan.com tuba.tekeli@sumahan.com
Tel 90-216 422 8000 Fax 90-216 422 8008



Armada Pera

The Armada Hotel has opened a new boutique hotel in Istanbul's Pera quarter in 2013, in the sensitively restored Parma Apartments, once home to a renowned Ottoman palace tailor. Enjoy the 360-degree view from the roof terrace, and travel back in time as you explore today's Istanbul, while enjoying truly 'tailor-made hospitality' and a sense of Art Nouveau style and comfort.

www.armadapera.com info@armadapera.com
Tel 90-212 293 7373 Fax 90-212 293 7377

Ibrahim Pasha Hotel – Istanbul

Converted from a 19th-century four-storey townhouse, the Ibrahim Pasha is the ideal place to stay for first-time visitors to Istanbul. The rooms are well equipped and comfortable and are decorated in a contemporary-with-a-twist Ottoman style. And there are minarets and domes aplenty on show from the rooftop terrace.

www.ibrahimpasha.com contact@ibrahimpasha.com
Tel 90-212 518 0394 Fax 90-212 518 4457

Empress Zoe – Sultanahmet

Each room is airy and full of charm in this delightfully peaceful small hotel, just a minute's walk from Ayasofya, the Topkapı Palace and the Arasta Bazaar. Breakfast is in a beautifully planted secret courtyard garden of cypress and palm trees next to the romantic ivy-clad ruins of a 16th-century domed hamam covered with wild delphiniums and snapdragons.

www.emzoe.com info@emzoe.com
Tel 90-212 518 2504 Fax 90-212 518 5699

Corinne Hotel

Conveniently located off Istiklal Caddesi near the Çukurcuma antiques district, the newly opened Corinne offers 39 rooms in a meticulously restored 100-year-old building by Turkey's famous architect Kemaleddin. Rooms have every conceivable comfort: special air-filtration system, heated floors, luxury bedding, even a pillow menu. Enjoy the sights and sounds of the neighbourhood in a hotel café serving delicious home-style meals all day.

www.corinnehotel.com info@corinnehotel.com

HOTELS AROUND TURKEY

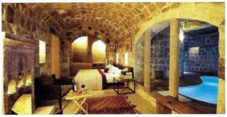
Online directory: www.cornucopia.net. Online reservations: www.cornucopiahotels.com

Taş Hotel – Alaçatı, Çeşme

A wonderful hotel in a little town that has become the Aegean showcase of rediscovered country chic. Taş Hotel is a 120-year-old stone house whose natural, unaffected style pioneered the vogue for Alaçatı: 7 rooms, a swimming pool set in a perfect lawn, and a superb breakfast of olives, village bread and home-made jam.

www.tasotel.com info@tasotel.com

Tel 90-232 716 7772 Fax 90-232 716 8517



Argos in Cappadocia – Uçhisar

Looking out from Old Uçhisar over a magical moonscape of volcanic peaks, fairy chimneys and fragrant valleys of apple groves and apricots, the Argos in Cappadocia is hugely inviting. Five beautifully restored mansions offer 40 rooms and suites (some with private cave pools). A stylish blend of history, hospitality, imagination and design. Nevşehir 7km – daily flights from Istanbul.

www.argosincappadocia.com aic@argos.com.tr

Tel 90-384 219 3130 Fax 90-384 219 2055

Sailors Hotel – Alaçati

Three charming, family run, boutique hotels await in the heart of Alaçatı with the owners' café and restaurant nearby. Each villa offers delightfully furnished guest rooms, with very hospitable staff in a peaceful setting. Abundant breakfast: homemade jams, local cheese, fresh bread and more. Just a 15-min drive to the beautiful Aegean sea.

www.sailorsotel.com info@sailorsotel.com

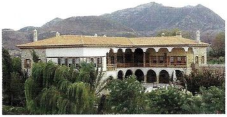
Tel 90 232 716 8765 Mobile 90-533 355 2744

Swissôtel Grand Efes Izmir

Ideally located in the heart of the city, in 40,000 square metres of landscaped gardens, Swissôtel Grand Efes has 402 luxurious guest rooms including 55 special suites. Delicious culinary experiences are offered in three restaurants. Advanced conference facilities and an unforgettable 5500-square-metre spa experience.

www.swissotel.com/izmir izmir@swissotel.com

Tel 90-232 414 1000 Fax 90-232 414 1010



Mehmet Ali̇ Ağa Mansion – Datça

This is a unique museum hotel set in almond, olive and lemon groves on the Datça peninsula. The Ottoman konak was built in 1809, its frescoes lovingly restored. Swimming pool, private beach, 18 rooms in a choice of modern or traditional style. The hotel's Elaki Restaurant is famed for its wine cellar and regional cuisine.

www.kocaev.com info@kocaev.com

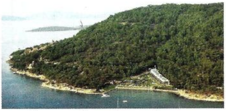
Tel 90-252 712 9257 Fax 90-252 712 9256

Alavya – Alaçati, Çeşme

Located in the heart of Alaçatı, Alavya has six beautifully restored stone houses, offering 25 individually decorated guest rooms. The private courtyards and gardens lure guests into a relaxing sanctuary, while spa and sports facilities provide more invigorating experiences. Chef Carlo Bernardini serves local cuisine in two exceptional restaurants, Fogo and Mitu. Meeting rooms available. Open all year.

www.alavya.com.tr info@alavya.com.tr

Tel 90-232 716 6632 Fax 90-232 716 6652



Ortunç – Cunda Island, Ayvalik

Situated on the secluded western side of Cunda, where pine groves meet the Aegean Sea, Ortunç is a blissful setting for a very relaxing retreat. The 40-room, minimalist-designed hotel has been awarded the Green Key for ecological efforts and natural products. Especially wonderful for those who love to swim in pristine waters.

www.ortunc.com info@ortunc.com

Tel 90-266 327 1120 Fax 90-266 327 2082

Museum Hotel – Uçhi̇sar, Cappadocia

'Wonderful, artistic, one of a kind,' writes an ecstatic visitor to this painstakingly restored Uçhisar house hotel with dramatic views over Cappadocia's tufa landscape. Each of the 7 rock-carved rooms and 23 suites, with their beautiful stone arches, is lavishly furnished and offers every mod con and comfort. Unforgettable.

www.museumhotel.com.tr info@museumhotel.com.tr

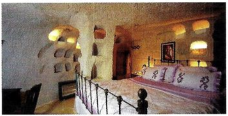
Tel 90-384 219 2220 Fax 90-384 219 2444

Divan Çukurhan – Ankara

This truly exclusive Preferred Boutique hotel occupies a lovingly restored 16th-century caravanserai at the heart of historic Ankara, at the entrance to the historic Ankara Citadel and close to the world-famous Museum of Anatolian Civilisations. There are 19 rooms, each individually decorated in its own unique style.

www.divan.com.tr info.divancukurhan@divan.com.tr

Tel 90-312 306 6400 Fax 90-312 306 6429



Gami̇rasu Cave Hotel – Ürgüp, Cappadocia

One of the finest cave hotels in Cappadocia, the Gamirasu Cave Hotel is situated in a sensitively restored 12th-century Byzantine monastic retreat. All 33 rooms are beautifully designed in harmony with the surroundings. Swimming pool, horse riding, hot-air ballooning and Turkish cookery courses.

www.gamirasu.com info@gamirasu.com

Tel 90-384 354 5815 Fax 90-384 354 5864

Zeyti̇n Konak Hotel – Alaçati, Çeşme

A hotel in 4 separate mansions full of charm, with 2 swimming pools and gardens green all year round. Peacefully located 5 minutes' walk from the centre of Alaçatı. Massage, yoga, fishing, windsurfing all available. Hand-made soaps attest to the delightful attention to detail. Traditional village breakfast and home-made jams.

www.alacatizeytinotel.com info@alacatizeytinotel.com

Tel 90-232 716 8081

Kempinski Hotel Barbaros Bay – Bodrum

Overlooking its own dazzling blue bay, this hideaway resort offers an oasis of serenity, where guests can luxuriate in the world-renowned Six Senses Spa or lose themselves dreamily in peace: 149 cosy rooms, 24 suites, all with balconies and unparalleled views of the Aegean.

www.kempinski.com/bodrum

reservations.barbaros@kempinski.com

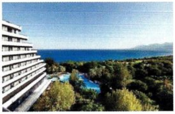
Tel 90-252 311 0303 Fax 90-252 311 0300

El Vino Hotel – Bodrum

Lush, secluded and intimate, this boutique hotel offers attentive, friendly service and a wonderful combination of comfort and attention to detail in a charming atmosphere. The rooftop restaurant serves local fish and delicacies, and enjoys a panoramic view of Bodrum Castle. El Vino is ideal for holiday, business or as a romantic getaway. Enjoy local wines from the owner's vineyard. Open all year around.

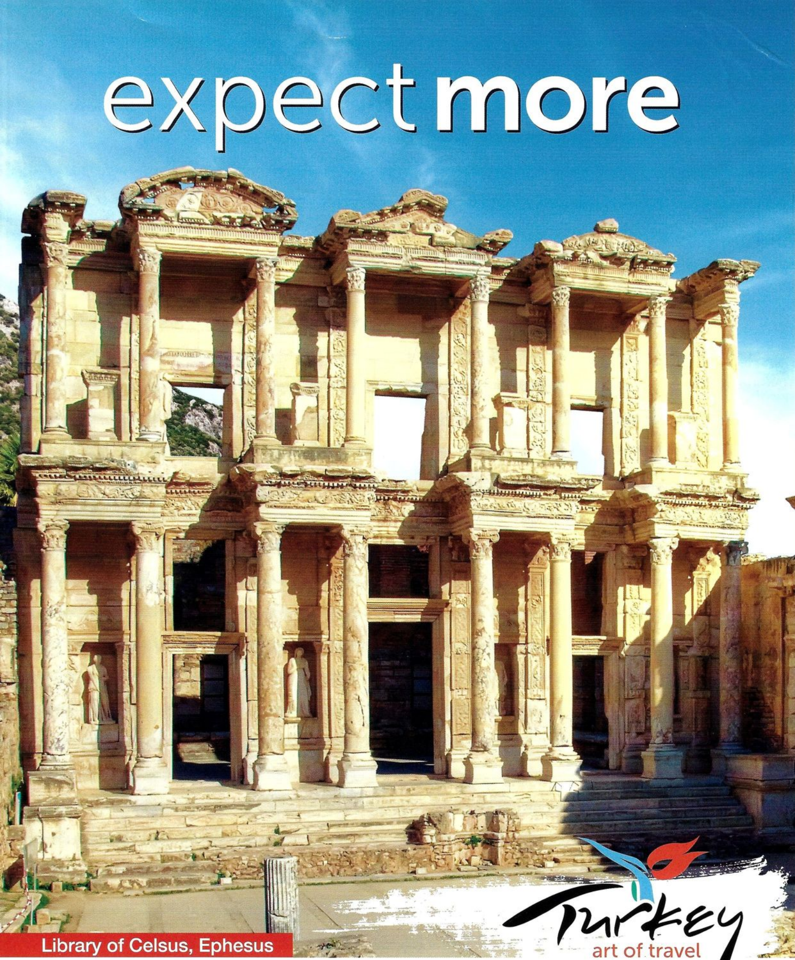
www.elvinobodrum.com info@elvinobodrum.com

Tel 90-252 313 8770



Book online

A hand-picked selection of hotels: from the heart of historic Istanbul to the shores of the Mediterranean, from the grand and glamorous to the serene and secluded. Book online at www.cornucopiahotels.com



Library of Celsus, Ephesus

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www.goturkey.com

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